

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
Department of Political and Social Sciences

# **THE POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN PORTUGAL**

**A Case Study on Institutional Contexts and Communication Processes of  
Environmental Collective Action**

by  
J. Gil Nave

Thesis submitted for assesment with  
a view to obtaining the Degree of Doctor of the  
European University Institute

Florence, January 2000

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## Summary

This thesis aims at contributing to reverse a widespread version of environmental movement politics in «late comer»/«post authoritarian» democracy cases, which too quickly identify the scarcity of mass protest on environmental issues and of ‘green’ party politics as a deficit of social movement. An historical appraisal of the environmental movement and of political opportunities in Portugal seems to point to particular mobilization structures and patterns of action and organization, which are effected by features of the political system and political culture. These features make collective action to be highly dependent on conventional party politics and on state action, leaving no consistent institutional devices for autonomous participation of civil society groups. Policy-making designs display an apparent deficit of «politics of interests» and the state emerges as a pivotal actor of modernization. Environmental collective action tends to fall under the aureola of the state for resources and participation. By giving privilege to discourse conflicting in the public sphere instead of direct action and political mobilization, environmental movement organizations get to appear as autonomous «cultural pressure groups».

The period of analysis covers the advent of democracy in the mid 1970s and the striving for advanced patterns of modernization after the adhesion to EEC/EU in the mid 1980s. A «political process» model approach allows to specify the political opportunity structure which determines the patterns of action and organization of environmental movement politics in Portugal. However, a «political communication» model approach is further developed to account for institutional contexts and communication processes of environmental collective action, and for political and cultural effects of «discourse conflicting» in the public sphere of environmental politics. The rise and institutionalization of environmentalism in Portugal is, thus, analysed as a broad «social communication» and «social learning» process where political and institutional arrangements meet cultural processes of issue framing with regard to ecology, development, modernization, and democracy.

**THE POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN PORTUGAL - A Case Study on Institutional Contexts and Communication Processes of Environmental Collective Action**

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## Introduction

The fact that most of the European research on «new» social movements has come from more advanced capitalist democracies of Northern Europe -- Germany, in particular -- does not necessarily prove that «new» movements have been either quantitatively or qualitatively more important than in Southern European countries. This could simply be due to the fact that Southern researchers were too occupied with their own countries' regional problems and party systems. This problem was initially raised by Klandermans and Tarrow (1988: 16-7) as a challenging point to one of the most basic assumptions of the European Tradition of «New» Social Movement Studies, which stresses a causal link between advanced industrialism and «new» social movements.

The authors suggested it might be primarily the conditions of national politics, that is, of the «political opportunity structure», and not factors internal to social movements that determined divergent "careers" of movements within different national settings. The best way to demonstrate the «newness» of contemporary social movements, they concluded, is to compare similar movements in different countries (*ibid.*). After they wrote this, nation case comparison was made a decisive step of social movement research. (e.g. McAdam *et al.* 1996).

This thesis aims at discussing the upsurge and institutionalization of environmentalism as a contemporary social movement in Portugal. Strictly speaking, my study does not bear upon comparative research, but aims to add something to social movement research by deeply studying a nation case that has been left aside.

The analysis period begins with the advent of democracy and the fall of the colonial empire in the mid 1970s, and covers the striving for a successful adhesion to EC/EU from the mid 1980s onwards. Thus, the analysis emphasizes Portuguese polity at a turning point of the national identity project. Democratic reform, development, modernization, and living standards commonly found in advanced capitalism appear as first rank mobilization issues of political action in the period. We are dealing with a case from the less-developed, Southern area of the

European Union whose affiliation with democracy and advanced capitalism had been lagged behind by historical circumstances.

Indeed, the rise of environmentalism in Portugal is a feature of, and was affected by, the re-construction of democracy and the striving for reaching advanced patterns of modernization. In the mid 1970s, while most advanced democracies were facing the emergence of social movements mobilizing on «new» issues, Portugal was involved in a transition process from authoritarian to democratic rule. Hypothetically, it determined the character of issue mobilization processes that triggered the emergence of social movements, and blocked the outburst of mobilization on «new» movement issues. The nation's attempt to recover from dictatorship and underdevelopment seems to have imposed other political priorities and the emergence of other decisive collective actors.

The environmental movement started out in Portugal after the same wave of its counterparts in the rest of Europe and United States in the 1970s. However, one does not find similar cycles of street riots and wide mass protest actions, nor high levels of mass mobilization and constituency. The movement never exhibited a particular vocation for direct action and did not show particularly innovative in organizational forms of action and resource mobilization. In addition, it never achieved to develop a clear political orientation. This made many local political and social analysts to avoid using the term «new» social movement to characterize the emergence of ecological protest in Portugal from the mid 1970s onwards. However, an historical appraisal of the emergence of environmentalism and environmental protest in Portugal is necessary, in order to figure out the impact of the environmental movement upon the Portuguese society and the contextual features of environmental collective action in this case.

The rise and institutionalization of environmentalism in Portugal is analysed as a broad process of social communication. This means to add a cultural dimension to the analysis and to assume discourse conflicting as a pivotal dimension of environmental collective action. A narrative style can be found throughout this thesis, but it is not a mere descriptive approach to features and events of the environmental movement career. The emergence and further institutionalization of environmentalism in Portugal is analysed by studying protest actions and discourse conflicting around selected environmental issues and events. They are analysed as



strategic, explanatory situations which illustrate the evolving of relationships between a set of factors and actors embroiled in this social process.

Particular attention is given to state actors' strategy aiming at institutionalizing environmental protection and nature conservation as a policy field. For this purpose, I will analyze aspects of the inclusion of EC/EU environmental regulations into the internal legislation, and relate the evolving relationships between the environmental policy domain and other policy sectors to state actors' initiatives in shaping institutional devices for participation of movement organizations in environmental politics.

Although further circumstantial descriptions specifically focus on mobilization structures, organizational resources, issue specialization within the environmental movement «industry», as well as on mobilization contexts of some particular issues, the analysis of environmental politics follows a chronological order. There is a broad consensus about considering the collapse of the dictatorial regime and the admittance of Portugal into the EEC as the most striking political events of Portuguese society in the second half of this century. They are even said to give rise to the two most significant periods of the nation's political, economic, and social contemporary life. For the purpose of this research, empirical data also indicate that the transition to democracy next to the fall of the dictatorial political regime in 1974, and the political stabilization and economic growth initiated with the adhesion of Portugal to the EEC, in 1986, define essentially two periods. These two periods highlight particularly important features and changes in local environmental politics and also concerning the rise, careers, organizational and political strategy, and action repertoires of movement organizations. Under the aureola of the EC/EU, the late 1980s correspond also to the unleashing of a more favourable «mood» for environmental issues. This led to the creation of the ministry for the environmental policy domain in 1990.

This periodization, thus, emphasizes changes in patterns of issue mobilization by groups, and in the approach of state actors to environmental issues and associations in policy-making processes. Moreover, further detailed periodization made after some remarkable events of the environmental movement evolution does not contradict the twofold division of the whole process.

Thus, I analyze first the politics of environmental protest and issues on the eve of EEC adhesion, covering the period between the revolutionary *coup d'état* in 1974 and the EEC Adhesion Treaty in 1986. Next, the main topic is the shaping of institutional contexts of environmental politics and collective action, covering a period of around ten years after the Adhesion.

I hope this piece will reverse a widespread idea among political and social scientists in Portugal, who too quickly identify the scarcity of mass protest and political action on environmental issues as a deficit of social movement. I argue that the so-called deficit of environmental movement asks for more nuanced explanations. Surely, it disguises particular patterns of organization and mobilization structures that need to be investigated, mainly resorting to a historical appraisal of the movement and political opportunities.

## **PART I**

### **Collective Action, Opportunity Structures, and Public Space of Environmental Politics in a «Late Comer» Advanced Society Polity**

Part I has two purposes. First of all, there is a short discussion of theoretical approaches to the problems of mobilization processes and collective action apt to analyse the potentials of environmental movement organizations whose participation in the public sphere of environmental politics is conditioned by given political opportunity structures. This discussion will result in the building of a basic analytical model, which ought to be applied to the case study. The analytical model includes the specifying of explanatory problems, hypotheses, and methodology of research sketched for analysing the rise of environmental issues and the shape of the environmental movement in Portugal.

After stressing the most visible features and the specifics of a single-nation case from the Southern UE periphery of less industrialized, «late comer» democracies, Chapter 2. gives an account of contextual political factors for the emergence and further institutionalization of environmental movement politics in Portugal. This analysis puts an emphasis on the role of the state, on features of the political system and of the political culture, and on the level of civil society autonomization and its potentials of organization. The aim is to outline the essential traits of the structure of political opportunities that influenced the patterns of action and careers of environmental movement organizations, and shaped environmental politics as a field of collective action.

## **Chapter 1. - Environmental Protest and Movement in a «Late Comer» Advanced Society Polity: Analytical Model and Hypotheses for a «Single Nation Case-Study»**

### **1.1. Opportunity structure, political process, and public space**

The difference between «resource mobilization» and «political process» approaches to contemporary social movements is said to be essentially one of emphasis and empirical focus (McAdam et al. 1988: 696-7). The primary focus of the «resource mobilization» approach is on social movement organizations and on mobilization efforts to tackle with macro conditions and ongoing micro challenges of member recruitment and resource mobilization. Whereas the «political process» model has the virtue of stressing the political grounds of opportunity structures determining the conditions of emergence and action of social movements. Although not incompatible with the former, it emphasizes, far more than the «resource mobilization» approach does by, (a) the importance of indigenous organization and (b) of a favourable structure of political opportunities. (op: cit.: 697). Thus, the «political process model» approach represents a somewhat different perspective, which opens to the kinds of macrostructural questions European movement analysts deal with.

However, this approach was introduced by Charles Tilly's historical argument that the rhythm of collective violence did not so much depend on structural transformations of society, but was rather directly linked to shifts in the struggle for political power (Kriesi et al. 1992). Other factors influencing the intensity and patterns of collective action were admitted, such as the levels of urbanization and industrialization, which are included in the set of macro organizational conditions stressed by the «political process» model approach (McAdam et al. 1988: 703-4). But the most interesting arguments deal with the «level of prior organization» within civil society, and the «absence of cross-cutting solidarities», that is, the extent to which the strength and number of ties to other groups influence the likelihood of a social movement. These arguments allow for cross-national differentiation in the type of organizations and variation in the forms of collective action that predominate in different societies.

The comparative analyses of anti-nuclear movements in West Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States made, for instance, by Kitschelt (1986) and Joppke (1993) showed how the structural political context is of considerable importance for differences in mobilization, careers, and impact of new social movements of the same type. Moreover, this proved how the structure of political systems may encourage or discourage activism, even though movements in different circumstances, at least in their early stages, may seem very similar. Although not completely determining the course of social movements, a set of variables such as specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements, and historical precedents of social mobilization, may facilitate or constrain the development of protest movements. These variables are comprised in the concept of «political opportunity structure», which aims at specifying the factors that decisively influence protest strategies and the impact of social movements on their environments, thereby explaining most cross-national variations of social movements (Kitschelt 1986: 57-8).

With «the reassertion of the political», and the locating of social movements «squarely within the realm of rational political action», the «political process» model is, first of all, an attempt to place contemporary analysis of collective behaviour in a historical context and also highlights the continuities between institutionalized and movement politics. In this view, social movements are essentially a problem of doing «politics by other means», often the only means available to relatively powerless opposition groups. Thus, they «should be as responsive to the broad political trends and characteristics of the regions and countries in which they occur as are institutionalized political processes» (McAdam et al. 1988: 699).

Actually, within the context of nation states considerable evidence exists which suggests the crucial importance of changes in the «structure of political opportunities», that is, in the changing of receptivity or vulnerability of the political system to organized protest or movement activity carried out by challenging outside groups. However, the structure of political opportunities is hardly immutable. Variations may arise in either «'bottom-up' or 'top-down' fashion» (op. cit.: 699). Changes may originate in economic trends and political realignments that take place quite independently of any 'push' from insurgents: «improved political opportunities may also result from top-down efforts at political sponsorship by elite groups» (*ibid.*). For

instance, Gayle (1986) highlights the relevance of political systems that include agencies already sympathetic to movements. Other examples illustrate different ways of polity members encouraging activism through various forms of sponsorship (McAdam et al. 1988: 700).

The «political process» model still stresses the significance of other macrostructural (historical) factors in the emergence of social movements, such as «regime crises and general contests for political dominance within a particular region or country» (by Shorter and Tilly), the «absence of repression», and the «macroeconomic conditions» (op. cit.: 700-4). In one way or another, the «political process» model presents itself as being consistent with all of them. What distinguishes the «political process» approach is the importance assigned to explaining movement variations, both in terms of mobilization and impact, through differences in «political opportunity structures», which function «as 'filters' between the mobilization of the movement and its choices of strategies and its capacity to change the social environment» (Kitschelt 1986: 58-9). Whereas the «resource mobilization» perspective concentrates on internal variables of movement mobilization, the «political process» model emphasis is on relating strategic choices and societal impacts of movements to specific properties of the external political opportunity structures that movements have to face (op.cit.: 59-60).

Political opportunity structures can, thus, promote or restrain the capacity of social movements to engage in protest activity in at least three different ways: (1) mobilization depends upon coercive, normative, remunerative, and informational resources; (2) the access of social movements to the public sphere and policy decision-making is also governed by institutional rules; (3) social movements face opportunities to mobilize protest that change over time -- e.g., the 'demonstration effect' of other social movements. (op. cit.: 61-2).

Most European scholars' approaches to «new» social movements tend to converge in emphasizing macrosocial conditions for movements. This stresses movements' potentials and their societal meaning in face of deeply rooted processes of social change in advanced democracies. The «resource mobilization» approach, on the contrary, tends to neglect macrosocial causes and the impact of social movements. It focuses mainly on organizational skills and features of the mobilization processes, and on participative conditions of collective action. Whereas the former is by definition related only «to a historically-specific type of social

movements», the latter assumes implicitly «to be applicable to all kinds of social movements» (Neidhardt and Rucht 1991: 439). Through its emphasis on political contexts, the «political processes» model may be seen as a theoretical effort not only for mediating macro and meso level approaches, thus, making the other two approaches complementary, but also in providing concrete theoretical tools appropriate to the analysis of specific nation-state situations and to cross-national comparisons.

Indeed, «political process» model theorists show a particular vocation to developing conceptual bridges between movement dynamics variables that operate at micro and macro levels, and which can function as intermediate theoretical mediators for joining empirical work at both levels of analysis. The aim is to better understand links between macro processes and individual actors' participation in collective action (e.g. McAdam et al. 1988: 709-28; McAdam 1988; Kriesi 1993; and Kriesi et al. 1993). The «political process» model may, thus, be seen as an attempt to integrate and render complementary the so called European and American traditions of studies on contemporary social movements -- in particular, the «new social movement» and «resource mobilization» approaches. It is, thus, a basic analytical framework of this research.

However, other authors, such as Cohen (1985) and Eder (1993: 48-51), seem more preoccupied in constructing an alternative framework of social movement analysis. Drawing on a broader definition of collective action as social construction and/or social communication, it aims at more consistent theoretical integration of the levels of analysis and emphasis that are stressed by both traditions. They assume that «new» social movements depict a type of collective action for cultural and social change whose social identity is both self-produced and socially-constructed within a broad institutional context of action by means of social learning processes. These processes are framed at the societal level as a «system of social communication» (op. cit.:3-5). Eder (1993) refers to the *public space* as the «macro context of movement action» where social movements represent themselves and are *constructed* as collective actors whose efforts are aimed at accelerating and guaranteeing the communication of issues in society (op. cit.: 4-5).

In order to assume collective action as embedded in a broader societal context of socio-cultural production and reproduction of meanings, an attempt has to be made at balancing macro

explanations and micro process analysis. Highlighting the interdependence of collective actors within a broad institutional context is an endeavor to contextualize micro approaches to social movements. This context is defined as a «system of social communication», which is a way of adding a new element to the micro analysis of social movements, and of going beyond the definition of social movements as simple forms and processes of collective mobilization.

The introduction of a cultural or symbolic dimension to social movement theory in view of the structural context of collective action, as proposed by Eder (1993), also goes beyond constructivist approaches and identity theories (e.g. Melucci 1985, 1988, 1989), which tend to look at collective action as mainly a self-production process. It can also be applied to other one-dimensional approaches such as those emphasizing the political impact and structural constraints of «new» social movements.

However, this is not a task that can be fulfilled in a single-step or piece of research. Rather, it has to be pursued as a whole theoretical project. In any case, an analytical framework aiming at studying contemporary social movements has to be an explanatory model specifying a broader set of actors and factors whose roots, field of action, and impact extends beyond the political system. Thereby, other levels of analysis not restricted to the functioning of the political system and to institutional politics have to be considered as influencing environmental movement organization patterns, mobilization potentials of issues and of movement organizations, and institutional arrangements of movement politics. That is, strategies, tactics and alliances, action repertoires, and mobilization processes are expected to be determined by relevant factors emerging from both inside and outside the political system.

The «political process model» allows us to distinguish two sets of macrostructural political factors influencing the emergence and the shaping of social movements: (a) the level of organization displayed by the citizenry and socioeconomic interests outside the party system, and (b) the political realities, both determining the degree of structural 'readiness' embedded in the structure of political opportunities. However, the purpose of my research is to build an analytical framework for the emergence and patterns of organization and collective action in agenda-building processes of environmental politics as phenomena with more ample impact at both political and cultural level. The assumption is that environmental collective action is not only



shaped by binding factors of a given «political opportunity structure», but is also dependent on other influential framing processes and factors with specific cultural and societal meanings. These processes and factors may be decisive, for instance, in issue definitions, in mobilization potentials of issues, and in movement patterns of organization and action.

The theoretical model of research has, thus, to account for broader political and cultural processes that determine the scope and the essence of agenda-setting and policy-making mechanisms. For instance, issue events, EC/EU environmental and single market politics, the ups and downs of international environmental issues and movement politics, the globalization of environmental risks as a feature of modernity in contemporary societies, all certainly have an important influence on issue definitions and agenda setting, and on mobilization strengths of environmental movement organizations. They also induce issue attention of the government and politico-administrative bodies, of industry and business interest groups, political parties, media, etc. Thus, issues and issue definitions succeeding in agenda-setting processes depend not only on mobilization and action, but are also dependent upon broader framing processes, which influence all actors engaged in the competition for symbolic resources and issue «ownership» (Gusfield 1981 and 1989) in order to have influence in policy-making.

Nevertheless, the structure of political opportunities that facilitate or obstruct collective action of environmental movements is unquestionably modeled by the evolution of political processes, political regime, and state form. Moreover, changes in cultural and political processes of agenda setting, shifts in issue attention, and the rise or decline of other movements may also fuel or block the growth of an influential environmental movement. The question is, thus, to what extent can the concept of «opportunity structure» mediate societal and political levels of analysis in order to account for particular processes of change that cross-cut several levels of analysis? Particularly under review are processes implicated in concrete historical configurations determined by efforts to achieve modernity,<sup>1</sup> while an acceptable degree of democracy, welfare,

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<sup>1</sup> I am using the term «modernity» as it is commonly applied in the social and political sciences. It refers, thus, to the specific modes of organisation of social life, and institutional transformations in Western contemporary societies. Santos (1994) gives us a prolific and systematic approach over the particular paths of Portuguese society to embracing the societal project of modernity.

and development remained a strong mobilization issue. In other words, will it be reliable in analyzing processes that go beyond political structures themselves, and in making discourses on development and modernization to be related to specific political and cultural events that determine environmental issues in political agendas?

A particular focus has to be made on discourses -- namely about issues that confront the trends of economic modernization and development with the natural environment, which very often emerge in public arenas from outside the political sphere -- in order to grasp the societal meaning involved in collective action for environmental issues. One may not observe a relevant part of the whole process by restricting the analysis to the political field, or to movement politics. Assuming that collective action involves a broad symbolic struggle over the process of constructing specific meanings which have public sphere arenas as a mediation and formation stage before entering the political realm, the analysis has to be extended beyond what is at stake within the political and policy realm.

The problem of discourse communication in wider public spaces begs also for another specification regarding both the social construction and social use of discourse. Within the public sphere, the role of the public can not be restricted to simple «bystanders». The assumption that the citizenry only counts as «resources» for supporting (or opposing) the action of groups, that is, as potential sympathizers, contributors, or opinion opponents, is very often implicitly assumed by straight conceptions of the «political process» model (e.g. Neidhardt and Rucht 1991: 457). This is often contradicted by expanding booms of Nimby-syndrome phenomena addressing either technological risky or neighborhood environmental issues. It is not unusual to see Nimby action groups adopting discourses on environmental issues, which were previously made available by communication processes in the public space, and to use them for their «individualistic» practical purposes. We will return to this point with regard to empirical features of the case.

This is how I come upon the idea of a «deliberative rationality» model of public space. Specifically, in the Habermasian model of «practical discourse» communication in the public sphere, «participation is seen not as an activity only possible in a narrowly defined political realm but as an activity that can be realized in the social and cultural spheres as well» (Benhabib 1992a: 86). In this model, «the public space comes into existence whenever and wherever all affected by

general social and political norms of action engage in a practical discourse, evaluating their validity. In effect, there may be as many publics as there are controversial general debates about the validity of norms» (op. cit.: 87). «Making public» means, thus, «making accessible to debate, reflecting, action, and moral-political transformation», that is, making «issues of common concern [...] increasingly accessible to discursive will formation» (op. cit.: 94).

Democratization in contemporary societies is, thus, viewed as a growth of autonomous public spheres. Opposing the liberal model of public space, which «transforms the political dialogue too quickly into a juridical discourse about the right», the discourse model of Habermas emerges as a model «compatible both with the general trends of our societies and with the emancipatory aspirations of new social movements» (op. cit.: 95). The Habermas normative intent to democracy as a discourse-centered approach «places its faith in the political mobilization and utilization of the communicative force of production [so that] social issues liable to generate conflicts [could be] open to rational regulation, that is, regulation in the common interest of all parts involved» (Habermas 1992: 447). Furthermore, the author considers that «engaging in public arguments and negotiations is the appropriate medium for this rational formation of will» (*ib idem*) because state apparatus and economy in contemporary welfare-state Western societies are «systematically integrated action fields that can no longer be transformed democratically from within [...] without damage to their proper systemic logic and therewith ability to function» (op. cit.: 444). Thus, the goal becomes «to erect a democratic dam against the colonializing *encroachment* of system imperatives on areas of the lifeworld» (*ib idem*).

This «dam» is conceptually represented by the «political public sphere» which is considered «as the quintessential concept denoting all those conditions of communication under which there can come into being a discursive formation of opinion and will on the part of a public composed of the citizens of the state» (op. cit.: 446). Otherwise, the citizenry would merely play the role of welfare-state clients and consumers.

Moreover, Habermas developed a discourse-centered approach to ethics which «views the exchange of arguments and counter arguments as the most suitable procedure for resolving moral-practical questions», so that the validity of norms is anchored in the possibility of a «rationally founded agreement on the part of all those who might be affected, insofar as they take

on the role of participants in a rational debate» (op. cit.: 447). The practices and legal procedures of such public debates are institutionalized in order to «guarantee an approximate fulfillment of the demanding preconditions of communication required for fair negotiations and free debates» (op. cit.: 449).

In this way, «the discourse-centered theoretical approach has the advantage of being able to specify the preconditions for communication that have to be fulfilled in the various forms of rational debate and in the negotiations if the results of such discourses are presumed to be rational» (op. cit.: 448). Hence, the idealizing preconditions of fair and free debates demand «the complete inclusion of all parts that might be affected, their equality, free and easy interaction, no restrictions of topics and topical contributions, the possibility of revising the outcomes, etc.» (op. cit.: 449). In this context the legal procedures serve «to uphold within an empirically existing community of communication the spatial, temporal, and substantive constraints on choices that are operative within a presumed ideal one» (*ibid.*).

Therefore, this approach seems also to «open up the possibility of linking normative considerations to empirical sociological ones» (op. cit.: 448). For instance, «the deciphering of the normative meaning of existing institutions within a discourse-centered theoretical approach additionally supplies a perspective on the introduction and testing of *novel* institutional arrangements that might counteract the trend toward the transmutation of citizens into clients» (op. cit.: 450). Thus, it can be said that this approach pushes beyond formally instituted processes of communication and decision making. The following transcription of Habermas is, at this regard, acute and incisive.

«Corporatively organized opinion formation resulting in responsible decision making can serve the goal of a cooperative search for truth only to the extent to which it remains *permeable* to the free-floating values, topics, topical contributions, and arguments of the *surrounding* political communication. Such opinion formation must be facilitated by the constitution, but it cannot be formally organized in its entirety. Instead, the expectation deriving from discourse-centered theoretical approach, that rational results will obtain, is based on the interplay between a constitutionally instituted formation of the political will and the spontaneous flow of communication unsubverted by power, within a public sphere that is not geared toward decision making but toward discovery and problem resolution and that in this sense is *nonorganized*» (op. cit.: 451).

This transcription also introduces a topic that is currently being discussed under the rubric of the «rediscovery of civil society»,<sup>2</sup> as Habermas himself noticed. The institutional core of the «civil society» as conceived by the «public space» model is constituted by «voluntary unions outside the realm of the state and the economy and ranging [...] from churches, cultural associations, and academics to independent media, sport and leisure clubs, debating societies, groups of concerned citizens, and grass-roots-petitioning drives all the way to occupational associations, political parties, labor unions, and 'alternative institutions'». Political parties, though they are not part of the administrative system, became to a large extent fused with the state. However, like the other «opinion-forming associations», they also directly participate in public communications managing to have political impact via the media (op. cit.: 453-4).

The elements that are included in the structure of a «public sphere» in the Habermasian model are not formally different from those included in a «political opportunity structure» as defined by the «political process» model followers. Differences occur in the structural relevance ascribed to communication processes and discourse, and about the roles of association collective actors and the public in the public space. Whereas in the «political process» model the aim of acting in the public space by means of discourses and of communication processes is to have an impact in decision-making processes accounting on the background support of the public as a resource, the «public sphere» model seems to go beyond, in that its normative intent introduces a new dimension of participating in opinion formation and decision-making processes. Making the rationality of procedures a condition for the rationality and legitimacy of results the «public sphere» model allows to see late movements of voluntary associations as something more than merely «interest groups»: they are means of improving the public participation by approximating the formation of decisions and those affected (legitimacy); and of increasing the effectiveness of the political system (rationality) by promoting policy issues and outputs required by the current

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<sup>2</sup> A further discussion on the concept of «civil society» following Habermas' proposals can be found in Cohen and Arato (1992), whose thesis on the «contemporary revival of civil society» aims to demonstrate that «the concept of civil society indicates a terrain in the West that is endangered by the logic of administrative and economic mechanisms but is also the primary locus for the potential expansion of democracy under 'really existing' liberal-democratic regimes» (op.cit.: viii).

conditions of the citizenry and the «lifeworld» (new issue-politics). Thus, of ameliorating the conditions of democracy (normativity).

However, both models are inspired by, and addressed to, the analysis of societal and general political conditions of advanced society democracies, whereas «late comer» societies supposedly remain attached to problems of development and welfare, attempting to achieve similar thresholds of affluence as a priority goal. In this case, it seems that the more general scope of the «political process» model and its emphasis on starting political conditions as an opportunity structure make it more adequate. Nevertheless, the normative-deliberative model has the virtue of emphasizing the cultural dimensions of the polity. Yet, by advocating a normative ideal of democracy based upon the rationality of procedures, it stresses the emergence at the societal and political levels of «new» issue-problems resulting from simultaneously achieving affluence and democracy.

It seems, thus, that both models complement each other in the analysis of the experience of a «late comer» democracy, while the environmental policy domain appears as an especially adequate field for their empirical testing. Yet, I do not think that there are problems of compatibility between the two theoretical models, at least at the empirical level of analysis. In order to overcome potential problems of adequacy between both models at the empirical level, I used the «political process» model mainly for descriptive purposes and to operate at the «political», «institutional», and «organizational» levels of analysis, while I found the «discursive model» of the public sphere to be more effective at the «societal» level.

## **1.2. Mobilization processes and the role of the media in making policy agendas**

The concept of «opportunity structure» and the extent to which it can be used to analyse social processes whose scope of factors and effects extend beyond political structures is also implicated in any analytical framework for understanding environmental issue agenda-setting processes. This leads to a more comprehensive notion of «social construction» of environmental issues in view of «agenda-building» processes within policy domains.

Policy domains are made of a set of arenas for collective action over issues which are embedded by broader cultural frames. Several problems surface when dealing with some

theoretical models that have been applied to agenda-setting processes and structures. These models hardly account for communicational processes running outside policy domains and political system arenas.

The assumption that social movement organizations merely have to face «opportunity structures» in «agenda building» participation resembles, for instance, the model of «coupling the three streams» proposed by Kingdon (1984). Inspired by the «garbage can» metaphor, this model stresses the «political stream» as the decisive factor, rather than the «problem stream» and the «policy stream», for succeeding in placing an issue on the policy agenda. The «coupling» is described as an unexpected opportunity, in so far as the «political stream» is an independent variable of the actors' environment.

Knoke and Burleigh (1989) elaborated a more interesting analytical model on policy agenda-setting, accounting for the participation of citizen collective actors. Policy-making structures and processes are defined as an «action set», which is effected by factors whose roots are: (a) the «predetermined constraints» deriving from the societal system, political institutions, and macro-economic conditions; (b) the «policy domain cleavage structure», which is divided into «organizational actors» and «interorganizational relations»; (c) and the «public policy event outcomes». Apart from revealing other worthy analytical virtues, this model conceptualizes a variable which identifies influences coming from outside the political system. This refers to macro-economic conditions and the societal system.

Similarly, Burstein (1991) also describes how policy domains are linked to the larger political system and how policy change is effected by a set of dimensions around which organizations orient their action. These dimensions refer to the «substantive or functional basis», the «organizational basis», and the «cultural basis» of policy domains (op. cit.: 328). This is an attempt to go beyond strictly political approaches that lead to the conclusion that politics «proceeds primarily in numerous relatively self-contained policy domains, each operating more or less autonomously with its own issues, actors, and processes» (op. cit.: 329-330). This scholar presents an approach that not only accounts for diversified aspects of the three dimensions referred to above, but explicitly seeks to «open the window» to cultural dimensions of policy agenda-setting processes. As the author emphasizes, «public policy is also critically affected --

indeed, created and given meaning -- by culture». In other words, culture shapes how the goals of public policy are defined and the strategies of action (op. cit.: 346).

Since environmental issues emerge primarily as «social problems» (Yearly 1991:52-4), one can also recall Gusfield (1989) when he stresses that links between the emergence of «social problems» and the state must be examined with attention to: (a) the mass media as «image-making industries»; (b) other educational, communicational, and cultural institutions; (c) the potentially related specialized professions; (d) the place of the language of conflict and consensus in social problem definitions, as well as the contested and uncontested definitions of problem conditions; (e) how meanings and problems are transformed; (f) and how mobilization processes contribute to these transformations. That is, considering the whole culture of social problems is «a plea to move the study of social problems closely to the study of how social movements and institutions affect and are affected by the interpretations, the language, and the symbols that constitute seeing a situation as a social problem». Furthermore, it also means being cautious «not to separate the study of meanings from the study of their historical and institutional settings» (op. cit.: 439).

Therefore, we are entering an area where institutions are important referents for shaping collective action and agendas as an interaction process of «social construction». Being more than just a list of issues, agendas also require certain orientations regarding decision-making processes, which imply that organizations potentially have more interest in some issues than others. First of all, these preferences are developed inside the organizational frame of collective action and are shaped by the interaction between organizations and their environment. Besides being a list of preferences and issues -- and events, which are always issue-related -- agendas also require certain links among issues. These links define an institutionalized field or domain attached to an institutional system. Thus, agendas are in a way «social constructions» of institutional systems. The first level of analysis includes setting organizations' agendas, which depend on internal power relations, interests, and routines. The analysis requires, however, a second level within the institutional system. Collective actors are part of the institutional system, whose agenda-setting and issue definitions they seek to influence.



This is why the analysis must not be limited to looking at the effects on issue definition of the classical two-flow schema involving media, public, and policy/political agendas. The emphasis placed on the institution environment as an institutional agenda-setting system is not a question of effects and resonances, but of communication among different collective actors and institutions by means of different agendas and issue meanings. This also implies diverse interests and several frame references: «exchanges of information and the creation of awareness are not limited to transactions between the mass media and their audiences», in so far as individuals, groups and institutions also interact and inform each other (McCombs 1981: 136).

Agenda research concerned with societal influence has two main traditions: *agenda-setting*, through which the media communicate the relative importance of issues and events to the public (the mass communication tradition); and *agenda building*, the process through which policy agendas are influenced by a variety of factors, including media and public agendas (Rogers and Dearing 1988: 556). It is the latter perspective that is relevant to this discussion.

Policy makers tend to consider the media agenda as the public agenda. Thus most policy agenda-setting research concludes that the public agenda, once set by, or reflected by, the media agenda, influences policy agendas. The media agenda seems to have direct, sometimes strong, influence upon the policy agenda, but policy agendas also have direct and strong influence upon media agendas (op. cit.: 579). However, studies treating the mass media as a dependent variable are underrepresented within this field of research (op.cit.: 583).

My purpose is to make use of media reports to study policy and public agendas on environmental issues in Portugal. In order to achieve a broad integrated research approach that can lead to a comprehensive analysis of the cognitive and framing processes underlying the rise of environmental issues and the shape of environmental movement patterns of action, attention has to be given to interactions among issues in the process definition. By stressing the arenas where issue definitions evolve, one attempts to look at the influence of, and the interrelationships between, institutions and social networks, in which issue definitions are framed. Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) provide a penetrating «public arenas model» to analyse «the rise and fall of social problems» as issues. This model seems the most suitable to the purpose of my research. This public arenas model highlights six essential elements: (a) the dynamic process of competition

among social problem claimants; (b) the institutional arenas as 'environments'; (c) the «carrying capacities» of these arenas, which limit the number of issues gaining attention; (d) the «principles of selection» of issues, which depend on institutional, political, and cultural factors, and where dramatization, novelty, saturation, and issue politics and cultures come to be of central importance; (e) the «patterns of interaction» among the arenas, dealing with the «problem-amplifying and problem-dampening feedback»; and (f) the «networks of operatives» (op. cit. 56-72). This model emphasizes social-problem issues in a context of interactions among issues, and among actors as organizations operating at multiple, interacting levels.

Agendas are also a question of legitimacy, which largely defines the relationship between public and policy (or political) agendas. From this point of view, media are an arena which collective actors tend to give privilege to. Thereby, they not only aim at exerting influence upon the organizational environment and on other actors' agendas, but also at rendering their issues interesting to, and therefore adopted by, the public. This aim is important because the media also tend to present themselves as an actor for the public interest, and has rules and agendas of their own. However, being a central political arena, news media obtain their main importance from also being an arena for the public where actors' relationships within other arenas are also apparent. This is why «news» is also a «social construction», which the media have made their own by including it in media agendas.

This set of assumptions have, of course, several theoretical consequences that are implicit in the analytical model for the analysis of the rise of environmental issues in Portugal and the role of environmental organizations. First of all, these assumptions define a complex game of interacting agendas engaging the public, policy-making state actors, private and public interest groups, social movement organizations, the Government, politico-administrative bodies, and media agendas. Furthermore, they emphasize communicational processes and discourse, which have to be embedded in broader political and cultural framing processes of themes, events, meanings, and issue frames and definitions.

Stone's approach (1989) to «causal stories» and the formation of policy agendas is a good example of how actors produce a discourse about issues. As the author says, they «compose stories» in consideration of the relevant institutional context of decision-making about the issues.

That is, they *deliberately portray* the issue stories in ways calculated to gain support for their side. This author proposes an approach that attempts to go beyond formal agenda formation processes which focus either on the identity and characteristics (attitudes, resources, skills, opportunities) of political actors, on the nature of the issues themselves, or on the deliberate use of a certain language and symbols. Stone seeks to reach the core substance of agenda definition problems by dealing with the «causal ideas» as unities of analysis. Thereby, issue definitions appear as «a process of image making, where the images have to do fundamentally with attributing cause, blame, and responsibility» (op. cit.: 281-82). In other words, «causal stories» are prepared and displayed to address a specific political and institutional context that is expected to deal with them as issues. This is why they also comprise strict political functions: (a) challenging or protecting an existing social order; (b) assigning responsibilities to political actors by identifying causal agents; (c) legitimating and empowering particular actors as "fixers" of the problem; (d) and opening conditions to create new political alliances by defining both victim and causal agent sides (op. cit.: 295).

There are, thus, two main dimensions that have to be taken in consideration when analyzing the constitution of collective actors -- as protest actors and as participants in policy-making processes -- and the conditions in which collective action takes place: institutions and discourse. This means looking at institutional arrangements where discourse occupies an analytical role. In this sense, political institutions appear as a means of regulation of social relations. But they are also confronted with the emerging of new forms of regulation by means of negotiation within an environment of collective actors. In this case, competition for power and influence takes the form of maximizing advantage through making the other competitors to accept one's interests or point of view.

The problem of legitimacy and discourse as justification occupies, thus, a central role in the model and it has to do with formal or informal modes of regulation. As long as concrete environmental issues are open to discussion to groups in arenas, the level of openness of the arenas denounces institutional or political arrangements. These arrangements can result from attempts at engaging all or rather excluding some of private and public interests involved. Consequently, legitimacy comes from the fact that everyone with interests on an issue can enter

the discussion within the negotiation fields. and that everyone's point of view has to be taken into consideration. Even when the goal of negotiation is not decision-making as such, but simply the definition of options and confrontation of opinions, the result may be a specified set of orientations about the issue, which sets its future in terms of policy-making. In other words, our model has to account for two ways of relating institutions and discourse. On the one hand, legitimacy does not come directly from discourse but from external procedures such as voting, democratic rules, press discourse, etc. On the other hand, legitimacy is also obtained from participating in the internal discourse of negotiation produced by actors inside institutionalized arenas, that is, from internalizing the discourse into the procedure systems of institutions. This model allows us to approach agenda-setting not only from the institutional and social actor perspectives but to make both actors and institutions come together to define and set the agendas and issue definitions.

### **1.3. Analytical model and hypotheses**

Balancing all achievements of previous theoretical discussions, a more extended conception of «political opportunity structure» can be grasped. This conception aims at developing a more comprehensive notion of «social construction» of collective action and issues in view of «agenda-building» processes running in specific arenas of policy domains. First of all, one has to specify how collective action outcomes depend on the extent to which a given «political opportunity» is structured, that is, on *independent* variables defined as constraints of the social movement organization environment. Second, analyzing «new» social movements as collective actors which attempt to universalize their view over society or over some societal issues can neither be restricted to political or policy agenda-setting participation, nor to the organizational frame of action and the structure of their environment system. Rather, collective action by «new» movement organizations have to be embedded by societal, cultural meanings of the «new» issue contents themselves, which they «communicate» to society in the present historical and societal context. In other words, apart from the controversial aspect of their «novelty» -- which one may assume as being eventually encapsulated in the pioneering of some

social issues which are finally being internalized by modern societies -- social movement organizations which have emerged since the late 1960s in advanced societies are not simply «pressure groups» seeking «normalized» participation in agenda building processes. Their issues, forms of collective action and societal impact, may mean something more in the context of social learning processes of experiencing modernity.

The question which arises is whether the analytical and theoretical tools highlighted so far account for the communicative and discursive processes that a concrete contemporary society have been experiencing in the latter part of the twentieth century by means of an emergent environmental movement, not only at the macro level of analysis but also at the meso and micro levels, which are necessarily at stake when doing a «case-study».

Another question is whether the concept of «opportunity structure» is a proper theoretical tool for such a study and if it can be operationalized beyond more narrow conceptions, which simply stress the external political institutional structure restraining or facilitating collective action? Or is it an analytical tool that can comprehend broader cultural, institutional, and framing processes determining the outcomes of agenda-setting?

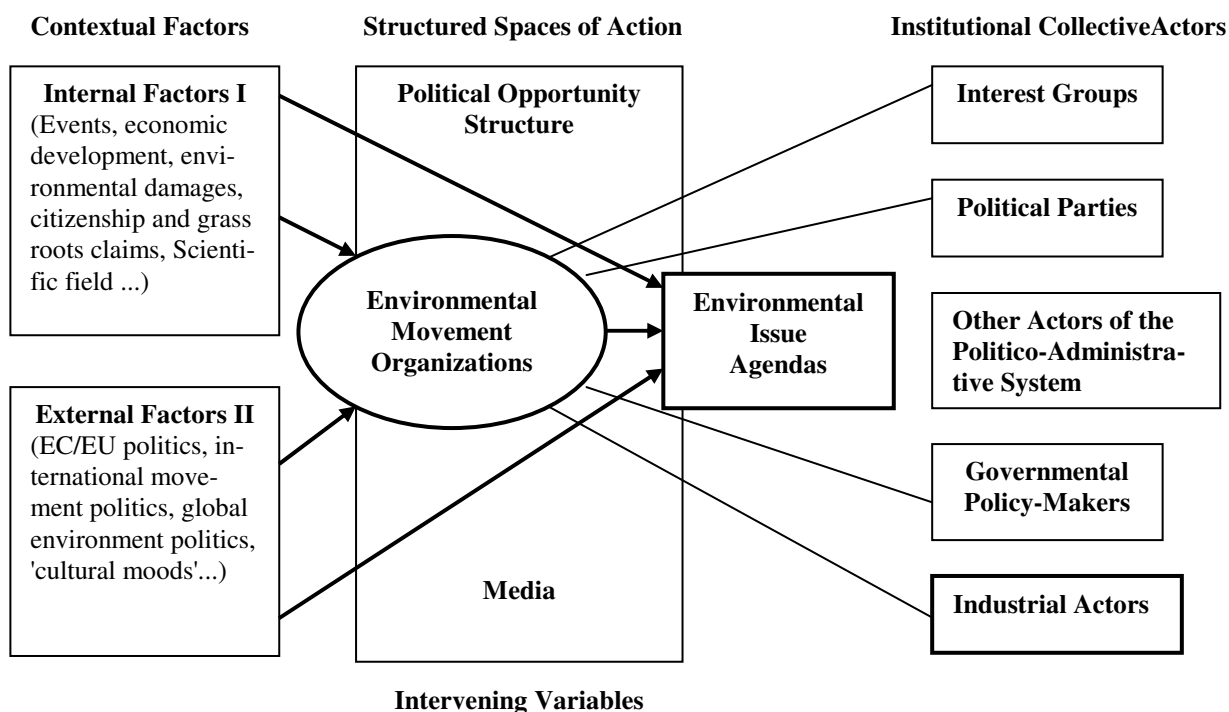
The embedding of social movement organization's activities in a broader field of interaction provides an emphasis on the «social construction» of issues and movements. This is an important step towards perceiving the role of social movement organizations in agenda building. The analysis includes interorganizational networks, either informal or formally institutionalized, constituted by public agencies, groups, and other private actors with interests at stake in policy formulation.

The idea is, thus, to develop an analytical model accounting for several dimensions of analysis. The assumption is that nation-state cases of environmental movements are shaped not only by a given political opportunity structure but are also embedded in broader political and cultural processes of agenda-setting, policy-making, and inter-actors competition for symbolic resources and issue «ownership». They also influence socio-cultural frames that determine issue agenda definitions in public, political, and policy arenas.

The explanatory model, whose schema is shown in Figure 1, still has to account for the discussion on the concepts of public sphere and political opportunity structure. It extends to

public and policy arenas where communicative, cultural frames are debated. For instance, the «goods» and «bads» of environmental issues and economic modernization, democracy and political culture, the ethics of society relationships to nature, definitions of quality of life, and equity for present and future generations tend to emerge in public arenas as frames of concrete issues and problem definitions.

**Figure 1 - Model of Analysis**



The substantive contents of the model is not considered in the following description. It will be carried out throughout empirical descriptions of Part II-III. Some of its features will only become fully clarified in connection with the empirical analysis. What follows is merely a preliminary account -- and Figure 1 a simplified schema -- of the main dimensions and features of the analytical model.

Movement organizations, interest-groups, political parties, governmental policy-makers, as well as actors of the politico-administrative system, media, and economic sectors represent an important set of actors engaged in processes of environmental issue agenda-setting. However, to account for the «social construction» of environmental agendas and the shape of the environmental movement, the model has to comprise a specific and institutionalized policy domain. This involves setting a separate agenda and institutional field as a network of arenas for mutual interaction. The role and impact of these arenas depend on the development and features of the policy domain.

Furthermore, the late democratization process may have strongly affected priorities ascribed to «new» issues in public, political, and policy agendas, and mobilization potential of «new» issue movements. For instance, some features of the «political opportunity structure» for environmental issues and for shaping the environmental movement in Portugal, which I will discuss later on, made environmental issue agendas strongly dependent on both the government and politico-administrative system initiatives. The non-priority status of environmental issues in political and policy agendas made them particularly dependent on state action in other policy fields such as industrial modernization, regional and local infrastructures development, and forestry.

On the other hand, direct participation of citizen groups in politics, apart from an exceptional expansion in the post-*coup* period, has been integrated by the party system. Since the mid 1980s, the stabilization of the political regime and party system allowed for establishing new conditions of governability and for enhancing democratic practices, particularly at the policy-making level. Thus, environmental politics have been strongly effected by commitments with the EC/EU, which increasingly imposed the creation of an environmental policy domain to abide economic modernization of the nation to EC/EU environmental regulations.

Consequently, we have environmental issue agendas, either at the political or policy levels, strongly dependent on initiatives of the government, the politico-administrative system, and on other policy domains where participation of opposition parties, interest groups and economic sectors' «lobbies» are much more institutionalized and influential. On the contrary, one finds environmental movement organizations very zealous to maintain their independence from

both the political and the overpoliticized interest group fields. This justifies the positions that movement organizations' and issue agendas' boxes demonstrate in Figure 1. Movement organizations are much closer to a set of «internal» and «external» factors coming from the outside of the political field and which have exerted extremely important influences either on agenda-setting, issue definitions, or movement organizations patterns and actions. On the contrary, the environmental issue agenda diagram demonstrates in Figure 1 the decisive weight of the political institutional field.

The «political opportunity structure» is, thus, treated here from a twofold point of view. On the one hand, it appears as a set of politically related structural factors, which in this case is determined by the general political evolution and by the political system configuration beginning in the early 1970s during the formation and stabilization of the new democratic regime. This is the diachronic perspective of analysis. On the other hand, there is the circumstantial structure of interrelated institutional fields, actors, factors, and interaction networks. They are all explicitly described in the model and seem to be the most important factors describing the role, status, patterns of organization, and potential of mobilization of the environmental movement.

Thus, the explanatory model specifies a set of actors from both inside and outside the political system, allowing us to distinguish two sets of macrostructural political factors which influence the emergence of environmental issues and the shape of the social movement including: (a) the strength of the organizational field displayed by the citizenry and socio-economic interests outside the party system; and (b) the broad political structural factors related to political processes and political regime formation, both determining the structural 'readiness' of political opportunities.

It is also assumed that movement organizations interact with this institutional field not only through institutionalized arenas but also through mutual, sometimes informal, direct contacts and interactions, which define channels for both cooperation and conflict not always evident in public arenas. For instance, situations of conflict and cooperation come from direct links established between movement organizations and state agencies or industry sectors. The fact that social movements which have been mobilizing on environmental issues in the past have concentrated their efforts on issues concerning corporate actors (Kriesi et al. 1993: 158) is also



apparent for the case of Portugal, although the state remained the main target of claims. Nevertheless, the «greening» initiatives of some industry sectors also enhanced opportunities for occasional collaborations with movement organizations, by funding publications or requesting advice in environmental impact assessments.

However, «other factors» are expected to have had direct influence on environmental issue agendas and on movement mobilization potentials. This analytical framework should also account for other influential processes and framing factors, some of which feature specific cultural meanings with impact at the societal level, which decisively appear in issue agenda definitions and influence movement organization potentials and patterns of action. These framing factors are present in public arenas as socio-cultural frames which determine competition for symbolic resources, issue «ownership», and issue definitions. For instance, issue events, discourse frames of economic development policy initiatives, EC/EU environmental and single market politics, the «ups and downs» of international environmental issues and movement politics, the globalization of environmental risks, the internationalization of environmental protection, and so on are all sources of framing processes which act as important influences upon issue rising and definitions, agenda-setting processes, and action patterns and strategy of all the actors involved in debating issues in public and policy-making arenas.

Certainly, the nature of some issue framing is interactive (Neidhardt and Rucht 1991: 446) and, in particular, we have to consider the decisive role of the mass media within this realm. This topic requires further elaboration of reliable and manageable methods to analyze the discursive strategies of actors and framing. On the one hand, issue cultures and packages are a crucial part of the symbolic struggle for mobilization and construction of specific meanings (Gamson 1988).<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, they allow us to verify to what extent social, cultural, and economic changes may create issue specific potentials independent of the mobilization potentials of movement organizations (Kriesi et al. 1993).

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<sup>3</sup> Gamson (1988) gives an insightful analyse on how mobilization potentials of collective actors are affected by the presence of certain themes (and counter themes) within the «political culture», and how «issue packages» resonate with these larger themes. The author characterizes «issue cultures» and «cultural resonances» of «issue packages» as a sort of battleground for the conversion of mobilization potentials into action (op. cit.: 220-8).

Another question is how to be fair to groups at the local and "grass roots" level, which tend to remain more informal and without strong ties to higher policy levels, but whose scope of action and mobilization efforts deserve more attention if one takes into account they often function as the rearguard of national-level movement organizations. These are, certainly, more powerful and well organized -- thereby coming closer to the model of conventional interest groups -- and use more sophisticated techniques than simply enlarging constituency for fundraising, but it is hard for them to develop strong connections at the local level.

A similar problem is apparent if one assumes that «social movements, unlike formal organizations, frequently lack observable boundaries» (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988: 15). For instance, one has to consider the relevance of individual activism performed by either influential public-opinion makers and other notables in public and political spaces. Very often, they are rather unknown scientists and pioneers of environmental activism, frequently acting inside university and state agencies but outside specific environmental movement organizations. They perform relevant environmental activism through extended, informal or personal networks. The same must be said about the experts and technicians of scientific bodies of state administration, who contributed to the development of an environmental policy sector inside state administration.

In Figure 1, and consequently in the analytical model, the government and other actors of the politico-administrative system are distinguished for two reasons. The first is to allow the consideration of direct interaction between movement organizations and specific politico-administrative bodies such as administrations of parks and natural reserves, expert bodies of state agencies and of the administration, etc. The second is to identify local administrations, which have not only been important sponsors for a large number of grass roots movement organizations emerging as conservation local associations at the local level, but are also important supporters, though sometimes also opponents of environmental issue mobilization.

It is usually said that the weakness of environmental movements in «late comer»/«post authoritarian» advanced society democracies, is largely due to the fact that movements in these cases lack organizational capacity to transform ideas and «opportunities» into a well defined program of action in the political field. This statement often means the lack of a strong Green

Party led by more or less radical political ecology factions.<sup>4</sup> However, social movements are dependent on a broader public, which may understand and appreciate their demands. In addition, they usually depend also on parties and pressure groups which may adopt movement demands and transfer them into the polity. From this point of view, the environmental movement faces the political sphere as a mediating stage to give the initial impulses for change in environmental issues.

The conceptualization of this mediating sector as a system with a specific «division of labor» would lead us to assume that the societal function of movements within the realm of politics is mainly to keep vitality of parties and interest groups and to maintain their capacities of learning. Social movements would serve, then, to compensate inherent deficiencies of parties and interest groups as far as they tend to represent only «worthwhile» interests according to the logic of self interest. However, when parties and interest groups do not seem to be very responsive to demands of movements -- as is the case of Portugal as far as environmental issues are concerned -- then there is a high probability that movements will either radicalize their action or transform themselves into parties and interest groups, or split in accordance to these strategies (Neidhardt and Rucht 1991: 453-4). Why this did not happen in Portugal is a question one must foresee. This particularly makes the political system and its public arenas a field of analysis. Here we are confronted with what is usually called the social movement «political opportunity» analysis, aiming to understand the specific configuration and changes of the «political opportunity structure» for the environmental movement in Portugal.

Most approaches to the emergence of ecological crisis in modern contemporary societies rooted in the European sociological tradition, despite deep theoretical differences, link the emergence of the late social movements to the trends of industrialization, economic growth, and political disfunctions triggered by structural changes in differentiation and rationalization of modern political systems. The ubiquitous character of environmental crisis and «new» social

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<sup>4</sup> This argument is often used by local internal politics analysts to conclude a deficit of «new» social movements in «late comer» societies. For the Portuguese case, I will further comment on this kind of argument in Chapter 8. About the lack of political impact of environmental movements in other cases from the European Union periphery, similar assertions can be found in Stevis (1993) about the Greece case. See Baker (1990), Farrell (1989), and Whiteman (1990) for the Irish case.

movements are described as specific features and central dimensions of the ongoing modernization of highly advanced societies. They explicitly refer, however, to a given historical context. Evidence comes mostly from more industrialized democracies of the Western world. The question remaining is whether social phenomena highlighted by theoretical constructs rooted in these assumptions have to follow the same patterns in less developed countries. For instance, do nations that joined the advanced industrialized «club» of Western democracies later form a different case? Or is it just a question of timing which affects the rise of environmentalism, patterns and intensity of environmental protest?

Although deep changes have gradually occurred since the early 1990s, the case of Portugal seems to exhibit a set of trends that steadily diverge from this model. There have been few mass protest actions on environmental issues. Movement organizations exhibit an apparent lack of mobilization resources and skills to mobilize mass protests on important issues. Movement associations have been mostly concerned with mainstream nature conservation and environmental protection activities, and performing steady moderate political orientations. In spite of their persistence in exerting pressure on political and policy fields, and being regularly consulted by the administration, they had found it hard to impose their views and issues at the policy decision-making level. On the contrary, they were highly dependent on state action concerning both resource mobilization and policy-making initiatives. Therefore, while collective action in the field seemed to have been confined to having an important cultural role, the environmental policy domain was strongly subordinated to other policy fields. In the end, achievements of the nation in this field resulted mainly from international (EC/EU) commitments.

Nevertheless, environmental problems rose early in the country with no less impact on the local environment than on other advanced societies. Thus, the question arises as to what extent social visibility of environmentalism, the social definition of environmental issues as «social problems», and the emergence of environmental protest in less developed, peripheral, relatively advanced, «late comer» democratic societies were blocked by means of their subordination to the politics of development, economic growth, and welfare. This means that in these societies the «social construction» of environmental problems as social problems was

obstructed by the pre-eminence development problems. This is well-expressed in policy-making agenda priorities established by state actors in the Portuguese case.

Paradoxically, this makes even more relevant the emphasis by European scholars on the role of «new» social movements as a crucial factor for social change in modern societies. Where the emergence of environmental movements had less impact or they are weaker, as it seems to be the case of «late comer» advanced societies, social change in the environmental domain became temporarily blocked, at least until the context of economic, cultural, and political integration and the trends of globalization provided other means for change. Thus, it may have happened that environmentalism was almost ignored when framed as an anti-industrialism ideology, but started reaching wider audiences when, bearing upon the mainstream discourse of «ecological modernization», it started being recognized as a development/modernization issue.

In the conditions provided by a «nation-state case-study», this may be stated as a first-level hypothesis of research. It implies following the definition and social construction of environmental issues as embedded in a broad «system of social communication» (Eder 1992: 4-5). Discourses become, thus, an important object of analysis, in that they determine at this level - I would call it the societal level (see Table 1 page 33) -- specific patterns of influencing opportunities for environmental protest and issues. This means, for instance, that discourses on development, economic growth, and modernization, as they are expressed by collective actors engaged in communication processes of public and political debates, determine the definition of environmental problems.

However, it is also said by «political process» model followers that macro-structural political factors determine both the generation and patterns of environmental movement organizations as a social movement, and explain most cross-national variations of movements. Political realities configuring the degree of structural 'readiness' embedded in the structure of political opportunities, thus, determine the potentials of collective action and the factors that influence the intensity of environmental protest, the mobilization potential of environmental issues, and the patterns of movement politics. Following these approaches, one may hypothesize that, the profile exhibited by the political opportunity structure for environmental protest in Portugal maintains their relevance as determinant factor effecting the patterns of emergence of

environmentalism and ecological protest, maybe more so than the degree of development, industrialization, and modernization. Therefore, one has to ascribe particular analytical weight to the political process that makes Portugal to be characterized as «post-authoritarian», relatively advanced democratic society, which have later entered the «club» of EC advanced society democracies.

**Table 1. Analysing Environmentalism and Environmental Protest in a «Nation-State Case-Study»: Analytical Dimensions, Theoretical Devices, and Analytical Objects.**

<u>THEORETICAL DEVICES</u>	<u>ANALYTIC DIMENSION</u>	<u>OBJECT OF ANALYSIS</u>
Environmentalism <i>Versus</i> Industrialism	[Societal]	Discourses on development, modernization, and the environment.
Environmental Protest <i>Versus</i> Political System	[Political]	Environmental issues and events on political (public) agendas.
Environmental Movements <i>Versus</i> State Agencies	[Institutional]	Environmental issues and events on policy-making agendas.
Movement Organizations <i>Versus</i> Mobilization Structures	[Organizational]	Mobilization processes on environmental issues and events.

If the concept of «opportunity structure» can analyze social processes whose factors extend beyond political structures, as I have discussed so far, it may be seen as the mediation between societal and political levels of analysis. Thereby, discourses on development and modernization can be related to specific political events and to the rise of environmental issues in political agendas. The hypothesis at this level of analysis -- I would call it the political level -- is, thus, to what extent are the patterns of emergence of the environmental movement different from other advanced nations' cases; and whether differences are essentially due to changes exhibited by the «political opportunity structure» during the period of analysis.

The verifying of the hypothesis at this level of analysis may confirm, contradict, or complement the hypothesis at the societal level. Actually the timing and structural political conditions within which environmental movements of most advanced societies were forged are substantially different from those of «late comer»/«post authoritarian» societies. In this case,

political forces and social movements mobilized until the mid 1970s for democracy. Thereafter both the stabilization of the new democratic regime and an acceptable degree of welfare, affluence, and development remained for long time a strong mobilization will.

At a third level, specific patterns of mobilization and action followed by the environmental movement are expressed in, and also determined by, institutional relations with state agencies and other collective actors acting within policy domains. They have to match institutional forms and interrelationships defined by policy agenda-setting structures and policy-making systems, in which definitions of environmental issues and events are the object of contention. This is the institutional level of analysis. Changes in the structure of political opportunities exert a dominant influence over processes of environmental issue agenda-setting that take place at this level. The hypothesis at this level of analysis is whether movement organizations were primarily induced by state action to embrace the model of «public interest groups», while having access to financial resources made available by the state and to institutional arenas of the policy-making system. Thereby, they practically dropped out of other forms of «protest action». In other words, whether their transformation from «protest groups» into normalized participants of policy-making structures was a feature of the movement gradually becoming more mature, influent, and powerful or, on the contrary, resulted from their weaknesses and dependence from the state. This had further consequences in environmental issue agendas, whose definition and frames, either at the public or at the policy-making level, were kept at the discretion of state policy actors.

However, since certain outcomes and processes of issue definition and agenda-setting have social movements as an *independent* variable, that is, are in a way dependent on mobilization potentials, organizational resources, and skills of social movement organizations, a full description of the characteristics of the social movement organization field is needed. At the organizational level of analysis, the aim is to find the internal «logic» of the movement as distinct from its «macrostructural basis». This includes the study of movement organization interactions within their own «industry» and within the movement sector.

To better understand the links between macro processes and individual actors, a set of conceptual tools, allowing for the specification of relationships of movement organizations with

their constituency and the public, also provide the bridges that have to be established between movement dynamics at micro and macro levels. They function as an intermediate analytical device between both levels of analysis in empirical work. In other words, this is the expected movement analysis of the «case». It is an essentially descriptive level, in which the role of the media, either as an arena or an actor by its own influencing the setting of public agendas, is also examined.

At this level, the working hypothesis is whether the deficit of organizational structures of groups mobilizing on environmental issues in Portugal, besides being effected by macro factors embedded in opportunity structures, is also dependent on variables internal to movement politics. Specifically, to what extent internal cleavages of the environmental movement, which expressed in different patterns of action and organization, affected mobilization potentials of the movement in face of particularly adverse mobilization structures. Under discussion are, in particular, the consequences for the movement mobilization potentials of the mid 1980s' cleavages on organizational coordinating structures. The debate drove some emergent movement organizations to cut off eventual links to other alternative and «outsider» groups. Would it be for identity reasons, for ideological disagreement, for differences on mobilization targets concerning the public, potential supporters, and constituency, or simply due to dissention over strategy in relationships with state actors either?

The analysis at all these levels, which are represented as a scheme in Table 1, supposes both a synchronic and a diachronic axis. The latter asks for an attempt of periodization which extend to all levels of analysis. It means that cultural frames, the structure of political opportunities, the institutional field, and organizational resources, as well as patterns and forms of action may exhibit changes which influence each other. On the one hand, it allows a conjunction of changing cultural, political, institutional, and organizational factors which determine the vitality and ability of movement organizations to capitalize on important issues, and the vulnerability of political decision-making processes to pressures from these groups. On the other hand, the structure of political opportunities that support or obstruct collective action on environmental issues is modeled by the evolution of political processes, political regime, and state form. Finally, changes in cultural and political processes of agenda setting, shifts in public



issue attention, and the rise or decline of other movements may also fuel or block the growth of an influential environmental movement.

The analysis will, thus, center on the institutional context and design of the public sphere for environmental issue mobilization in view of communication processes that ought to have an influence in policy-making. In some way, it also hypothesizes some assumptions of the «political process» model approach running the other way around. If a certain degree of independence in collective action by environmental movement groups acting in arenas made available by the «political opportunity structure» is admitted, a question arises as to what extent their action promoted changes which were incorporated in the «political opportunity structure». These changes may derive from the «novelty» of the movement, as well as from its style of action, issues, and discourses in public arenas. The starting point for this discussion may be summarized by the following quotation from Habermas:

«A public sphere that functions politically requires more than the institutional guarantees of the constitutional state; it also needs the supportive spirit of cultural traditions and patterns of socialization, of the political culture, of the populace accustomed to freedom» (Habermas 1992: 453).

The pioneering efforts of environmental movement organizations as carriers of a «new» (ecological) discourse and style of action in the public sphere, had initially contrasted strongly with current patterns of «political culture» and «socialization» predominant in the Portuguese polity. Thus, they might be seen (for analytical purposes) as a suitable example of the role played by «new» social movements in enlarging patterns of participation in decision-making and democracy practices by means of enhancing the functioning of the public sphere. In this sense, as «associations of deliberation, contestation and argumentation» in a developing «sphere of mutually interlocking and overlapping networks» (Benhabib 1992: 21), although acting primarily in the field of environmental politics, they may also be seen as carriers of a new «political culture» into the polity and society.

#### **1.4. Data, methodological problems and research strategy**

In an essay about the «generalizability», «uniqueness», and place of case studies in comparative research, Bradshaw and Wallace (1991) value case-study strategies for single nation studies in sociological research by emphasizing how the study of unexplored regions and topics contributed to broadening Western sociology. The authors' advice stresses that these studies should be guided by emerging perspectives (op. cit.: 166). «Case-studies» always represent a challenge for both the researcher and respective theoretical assumptions. I hope that my attempt to complement a «political process model» analysis with a «deliberative rationality» model of public space, and the fact that Portugal is an «unexplored area» either in the fields of «new» social movements studies and environmentalism -- thus, an open field to «the principle of serendipity» (Bradshaw and Wallace 1991: 164) -- may fulfill these scholars' advice.

Investigating relatively less studied regions that apparently do not fit theoretical perspectives, which always help to inform general theory and explain conditions that deviate from traditional theoretical explanations, makes case-studies on national-states particularly valuable. Bradshaw and Wallace (1991) argue that case-studies constitute not only an important type of comparative research, but sometimes a preferable and useful strategy in certain circumstances, as when: (1) there is not sufficient knowledge of a case to place it in a given theoretical perspective; (2) a case only partially supports (or deviates from) theories; and (3) a case represents a special, maybe unique, set of circumstances or phenomena which deserve intensive studying without theoretical discovery as primary objective (Bradshaw and Wallace 1991: 154-5).<sup>5</sup> In other words, «casing is an essential part of the process of *producing theoretical structured descriptions* of social life and of using empirical evidence *to articulate theories*» (Ragin 1992: 225). The case's choice is, thus, not only due to pragmatic and cultural reasons strictly related to the researcher, but also because of the expected specificity of the case.

«Cases», as defined by social science methodology, are said to be either found as (1) «empirically real and bounded, but specific», that is, are admittedly given as «empirical units of analysis»; (2) «general and conventionalized [...]objects» of research whose existence one has

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<sup>5</sup> Feagin et al. (1991), Ragin et al. (1992), and Ragin (1991) also present a set of valuable critical accounts over the potentials, advantages, and limits of case-oriented research for both comparative analysis and social science theoretical advancement.

«no need to verify», in that they have long been «conventionally defined» by literature (e.g. nation-states); (3) «specific theoretical constructions» through «interaction between ideas and evidence» demonstrating their theoretical significance; (4) simply «general theoretical constructs [...] as products of collective scholarly work», depending mostly on «intellectual fashions change in social science» (Ragin 1992: 9-11). Using empirically bounded units of analysis -- would they empirically bounded or conventionally defined as nation-state -- is not necessarily incompatible with defining a «case» as a theoretical construct. Whether it is specific or not, always depends on previous work that supports the theoretical construction as a «case of...». Finally, a «case» always depends ultimately on causal explanations as findings, which have to be consistent with «what the case is a case of...». The juxtaposition in case analysis of theories and findings provided by previous social science research on the topic means stressing what is distinctive about the case, its theoretical relevance, and its historical interest. The historical course mapping of the case over time, either as a whole or by isolating relevant parts of it, and the appraisal of theories by constructing an explanatory model will make it possible to see which direction the evidence leads.

Case comparisons often de-emphasize historical factors when attempting to generalize findings. Indeed, the tendency toward ahistorical sociology often encompasses comparative sociological analysis. For instance, quantitative time-series analysis often fails to specify and analyse concrete historical processes that ground social reality (Bradshaw and Wallace 1991: 164). Certainly, most questions examined in the course of this research, such as those of policy developments, policy agenda-setting systems, symbolic competition for social definition of issues, or the openness of the political system to autonomous collective action of groups acting as «outsiders» -- all questions suggested by the analytical framework -- hardly would be converted into quantities and should be focused on through qualitative detail. For the purpose of explanation, and of eventual further comparison, the intrinsic historical trajectories relevant to the «case» need to be considered and highlighted. A primary purpose of case-study research is, thus, to specify and elaborate historical processes that are supposed to have an impact upon social phenomena under discussion.

Thereby, over-time internal comparisons are an indispensable methodological initiative. For example, how has the integration in national policy systems of environmental and single market policy directives from the EC/EU affected the growth, careers, and trends of institutionalization of local environmental movements? Thus, enough detailed periodizations accounting for both the whole and parts of the case, had to be carefully constructed, whereas the focusing on over-time comparisons of details for explanatory purposes certainly calls for a detailed time-line of policy-making events on environmental issues.

However, the specifying of the structural and cultural basis of political mobilization by «new» social movements hardly could be supported in this research by time-series or other kinds of statistical data. Focusing on parallel topics, other researchers have already used indicators that account for the transformations of the state and the economy, the expansion of the educational system, the rise of new middle-class sectors, the evolution of the class structure, the expansion of the welfare state, the rise of modern values some scholars called «post-materialist», etc. I will make broad use of their conclusions as I did not find it necessary to repeat their data analysis.

In order to add emphasis to the explanation one would also have to study whether other similar cases worked the same way. Actually, the introduction of a cross-national dimension, either in analysing structural conditions or sub-units of cases, would lend further support to findings which are displayed by the case alone, or to raise doubts about explanatory alternatives. However, given the lack of research on the topics concerning this nation-state case, my option was to follow a purely case-based strategy. Besides appreciating the complexity and uniqueness found in the specifics of the case, this allows me to study holistically and make every effort to assess each relevant factor of the theory that guided the research.

The aim is, thus, to apply a kind of «historically oriented interpretative work», accounting for specific historical outcomes or sets of comparable outcomes and processes chosen for study because of their significance for current institutional arrangements and social processes. An assumption is made that theory can be modified and interpreted within the context of each case, and that cases should in principle be compared with other cases as wholes and not as oversimplified parts. They should not simply be contrasted through one or two simple features from each of the cases because, again, the relevant contexts should be examined.

Typically, this kind of work aims to make further sense out of different cases «by piecing evidence together in a manner sensitive to chronology and by offering limited historical generalizations that are both objectively possible and cognizant of enabling conditions and limiting means» (Ragin 1987: 3). This is why I perceive my work as a first step to pointing out further comparative research.

A «case-study» which examines a nation-state as a unity of analysis, and focuses on environmental movement politics, environmental policies, and mobilization processes on environmental issues, has the primary methodological problem of gathering different data from a huge set of sources. Furthermore, data have to account for analytical problems at different levels of analysis, ranging from micro and meso level mobilization and institutional processes to macro, mainly symbolic and communicational, processes at the societal level. Finding feasible solutions by collecting and manipulating data and empirical materials, which have different uses and diverse analytical meanings depending on the level of analysis, is thus the first methodological problem I had to face in the course of this research. Data consistence problems are something one always expects when dealing with data from several sources, or referring to different levels of analysis. Nevertheless, this is indispensable for the purpose of the research. In this case, 'second hand' analysis and data materials that are relevant for this topic and which other researchers made previously available, served as an important support of research. It saved effort in original data collecting for the purpose of contextualizing.

Naturally, direct data from field work and documentary consultation appear as the most important basis of the empirical work. Field work comprised contacts and interviews with several kinds of participants in social and politic processes described. However, data collecting initiatives included essentially consultation of diverse sorts of documents in politico-administrative bodies of the environmental policy domain, in environmental movement organization documentation centers, in media documentation centers, and in central-national, local, and specialized libraries. In the archives of the Institute for Promotion of the Environment (IPAMB), which is a state agency I also analysed, I found indispensable sources of data on the

environmental movement organizational field, as well as on other kinds of institutions of the state administration.<sup>6</sup>

Data about the environmental movement organization sector available at the IPAMB allowed me to select a set of movement organizations deserving the elaboration of detailed monographies, but I just concentrated on essential aspects concerning mobilization processes, organizational and funding resources, issue and ideological orientation, institutional and movement «industry» relationships, international connections, expertise bodies, constituency and activities of groups. Data gathering has accounted for a great amount of groups at the local level, whose existence and organization often lacks a formal character. A lot of movement organizations also have archives, documentation centres, and collections of issued materials which deserve attention. But time was too short to cover them all.

However, at my consultation of media sources, I was provided with the most of data used in event descriptions and time-lines on movement actions, events, and issues in public, political, and policy agendas. Specific events and issues emerging in media agendas and published in the most important weekly periodical of the country were investigated in detail from 1974-1995. For the last five years even scattered information from daily periodicals was gathered. This provided factual material that has also been useful in preparing guidelines for interviews. Guidelines for media consultation were prepared to guarantee that issues, events, actions, and discourses favoured by media-agendas could be further typified. Content analysis of media reports, however, are mainly qualitative and descriptive, although time-lines on the intensity of movement actions as reported by newspapers was also outlined.

Data and analytical information about social structure, socio-economic development, political system, interest-groups, policy-making systems, state form and regime formation, and other structural conditions covering the period of analysis, were collected from available local bibliography. Relying on quite systematic empirical research, a lot of data was, thus, collected for this research, including periodicals and disperse publications issued by environmental groups, and interviews. They are all profusely used throughout this piece, to obtain a variety of empirical support for the analytic devices proposed by the argument, and empirical descriptions widely

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<sup>6</sup> About this state agency see Chapter 2, p. 79, and Chapter 7, p. 247.

supported by data documents. However, to avoid burdening the text with permanent reference to data sources, they had been eliminated, particularly newspapers and other periodicals.

In order to escape methodological problems emerging from the time scope of the analysis and diversity of data collected, information was organized to facilitate manipulation. Chronology and central problems arising from the analytic framework provided a first level of data assemblage. For instance, since the analytical framework included the analysis of influential framing factors and processes with specific cultural effects at the societal level, special attention was paid to either political or cultural-oriented discourses on modernization, development, welfare, European citizenship, social rights, and so on, obviously including the environment too. These kinds of «package frames» are examples of a second level of data aggregation. The same is to be said about concrete expressions of «other factors» I referred to above.

Issue cultures and packages are a crucial part of the symbolic struggle, mobilization, and action for the construction of specific issue meanings, which verify how social, cultural, and economic changes determine issue potentials independent of mobilization by movement organizations. Given the fact that some issue framing is interactive and the media have a decisive role within this realm, the analysis of discursive strategies and framing patterns by the media and collective actors had also demanded reliable and manageable methods.

Of course, data collecting initiatives were not all equally successful, nor all data sources I referred to above systematically covered. The idea is to contribute to the inception and further development of this field of research in Portugal. I hope my contribution is valuable from both a theoretical and empirical point of view.

## **Chapter 2. - Contextual Political Factors of the Emergence of Environmental Movement Politics in Portugal**

### **2.1. Introduction**

Democratic rules underlying the structure and the functioning of the political system and the patterns of political culture are important factors affecting the paths of emergence and organization of collective action mobilizing on «new» issues. They shape relationships between the state and civil society and, thereby, may either constrain or facilitate the movement careers. They are also decisive in shaping concrete public arenas where policy issues are debated. Therefore, they can be treated as key factors of the political opportunity structure for the emergence of collective actors mobilizing on environmental issues.

The analysis of the political system structure and the patterns of political culture that sustain democratic practices involved therein are, thus, an essential step of explanation for the purpose of this research. So are the institutional modes of policy and decision-making inherent to democratic practices and patterns of political culture.

It is commonly accepted that most political structures in Portugal, namely the forms of state action, political system, political culture, and patterns of policy-making structures, have their roots in the transition-to-democracy period and in the process of regime formation. The aim of this chapter is, thus, to discuss what kinds of political structures modeled the *status*, forms, and the character of collective action in environmental politics during the period of analysis.

To start with, we will discuss what, contextualizing the Portuguese case as a «late comer»/«post-authoritarian» democracy from the peripheral, less industrialized (Southern) area of the European Union, means for the purpose of the argument. Then, a set of essential elements characterizing the political system are described, such as the structure of state action and the functioning of the administrative system, stressing some important features of the structure of political opportunities for collective action. A focal characteristic of this structure is the party system model, which is also analyzed. The chapter still includes an analysis of the prevalent



institutional design of environmental policy-making in the period of analysis, emphasizing how practices and modes of policy-making are effected by the patterns of political culture prevailing in state action. Under discussion will be, in particular, the openness of environmental policy-making structures in relation to participation of environmental movement groups. In conclusion, a short analysis of the evolution of the environmental policy domain is presented, highlighting their paths of subordination to economic and social development policies.

## **2.2. «Casing» environmental protest and «new» movement politics in a «late comer»/post-authoritarian» advanced society democracy**

The adhesion of Portugal to the European Community in 1986, gave rise to a debate within political and social sciences in Portugal about the profile of Portuguese society in the context of European nations. Some authors argued that most differences between Portugal and the rest of the European Union nations, particular in Northern Europe, could be operationalized «as *differences of degree* -- and not of *nature* -- within a kind of continuum where countries sharing the essential European cultural values can be located, and to which Portugal geographically and historically has belonged to since the advent of this macrocultural area» (Cabral 1992: 944, translated from Portuguese and emphasis by the author). Others seemed, however, more concerned with specifying the structural differences. For instance, Santos' (1990) analysis of Portuguese society on the eve of the EC adhesion describes Portugal's features as a «semi-peripheral» nation. Drawing upon Emmanuel Wallerstein approach to the world system division of labour, Portugal should be classified -- particularly at the moment of its admittance into the EC -- as an «intermediate developed» nation. The classification does not entail any sense of equidistance from rich or poor countries. Rather, it stresses the specificities engendered by some characteristics of social and economic structures, such as: a) disparity, instability, vulnerability, and dependency of the economic and productive systems, and their patterns of modernization; b) high incidence of non-formal economy; c) broad segmentation of employment systems; d) insufficiency of scholarly, educational, and professional apprenticeship patterns; e)

the structural character of internal and external migration flows; f) the weight of familiar, local, and self-help solidary networks, including their specific value systems; g) deficit of efficiency of the administration and excess of centralization of the state; g) the depth and extension of social asymmetries, whose dark side often took the form of widespread clusters of below the poverty-line people with respective «poverty cultures».

Most disagreements about this debate, ranging from the rather moderate optimistic views to the most pessimistic assessments, appear to be more a matter of vantage point than fundamental dissent over the real contents of this profile.<sup>1</sup> In the end, all participants in the debate seemed to agree with Cabral (1992) when he stressed that «the essential differences one can empirically observe in values, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour between the Portuguese and the rest of European people, ought to be explained by the contingent character of national history and, above all, by the nation's demographic, social, and economic configuration the day before its admittance to the Community» (op. cit.: 945, translated from Portuguese).

Contributing unintentionally to this debate with a study on some evolutionary trends of Portugal and Spain towards a «welfare state» model, Esping-Anderson (1993) refers to the late democratization of both nations as an experience that followed the basic profile of the European post-war, dominant model of democratic and economically developed Welfare-states: «These countries emerged from economic underdevelopment and dictatorship, becoming relatively advanced democracies in economic terms» (op.cit.: 591-2, translated from the Portuguese version). Drawing upon similar data for the case of Portugal, Mozzicafredo (1992 and 1995) also basically agreed with this conclusion. Castles' (1995) cross-national analysis on the social insurance experience of the so-called new Southern Europe democracies -- which include Portugal, Greece, and Spain as a group usually treated distinctly from other Mediterranean older

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<sup>1</sup> An example of such balancing is Medeiros (1992), who agrees for the most part with Santos' (1990) analysis, though he makes a less pessimistic assessment of the national economic performance next to the Adhesion to the EEC. The author emphasizes the idea of «industrialization without modernization» to characterize some historical features of economic and social development in Portugal, which spatial paths of late industrialization are rooted in. Particularly, he refers to the trends of rural, diffuse industrialization, which he describes as a characteristic of development in several southern European regions of Portugal, Spain, and Italy (Medeiros 1994).

democracies such as Italy -- is even more affirmative by concluding they are «no longer the rearguard» and «no longer stand out as all that different from general OECD experience» (op. cit.: 311).

There is plenty of literature, particularly accessible to English readers, dealing with some «Mediterranean paradoxes» (Kurth & Petras 1993) of political systems, social structure, and delayed development of Southern European nations. The theoretical foundations of this debate are found in the works of classical sociology, in the historical perspective of «economic backwardness» first developed by Gershenkron (e.g. 1966), and in the sociology of the «tradition *versus* modernity reconsidered» by Bendix (e.g. 1967) and others. The debate has extended the scope of studies to social, political, and economic features of development and social structure in other areas. It first included Latin America and, nowadays, the Eastern Europe on transition to democracy gives new opportunities to introduce new focuses on the debate.

Within this literature one finds works focusing specifically on the Portuguese case. Particularly addressed is the transition to democracy and the cultural, economic, historical, and national identity backgrounds of the nation's «long road» to democracy, Europe, and modernization (e.g. Herr 1992). Some works rather focus on the unique features and consequences of the 1970s revolution in search for modernity (e.g. Graham and Wheeler 1983; Maxwell 1995; and Nataf 1995). Sometimes, both Iberian nations are categorized together for analysis. This aims to disentangle the features of Iberian, Southern Europe, or Mediterranean traditions (or specificities) of political culture, political system, political economy, and state action models. For this purpose, Italy and sometimes even Greece are included too. Very often, the scope of analyses and models includes Latin America (e.g. Wiarda 1988; O'Donnell *et alli* 1986) and Turkey. Or the privilege is rather given to international contexts of democratic transition in Southern Europe, in order to include the analysis of transnational networks and the politics of European Community integration (e.g. Pridahm 1991).

Apart from detailed analysis of events, conjunctures, and structural and contextual conditions, some authors addressing the Portuguese case gave some well-founded insights about the problems of bureaucratic politics and state apparatus reform (e.g. Graham 1983). Often some

of them stressed the continuing impact of the old dictatorship on the political culture underlying democratic practices of the early to mid 1980s (Opello Jr. 1983; Wiarda 1988). Also highlighted by these studies is the role of interest groups in the transition to democracy and European integration processes in Southern Europe in comparative perspective (Sidjanski 1991). By and large, they all corroborate many insights and analytic observations on political culture and political system in Portugal that are expounded next.

Another topic often emphasized in this literature was the sustainability of democratic achievement perspectives. A lot of analyses on this topic were elaborated from the commonplace observation about the lack of «civicness» qualities of political cultures in the European southern flank by comparison to citizen behaviour patterns, public authority, and a tradition of strong civil societies in Northwestern nations. This contrast was often exaggerated, as proved by the striking revival of civil society that almost immediately ensued upon liberalization and which made it virtually impossible for democratic transition processes to stop short of a more thoroughgoing democratization (Schmitter 1986: 7). However, it is widely accepted that the deficit of civil society organization and of citizen participation in public life in Southern Europe has roots in particular historical, cultural features of modern and contemporary times. An insightful account of this argument is the historical and political economy analysis of Salvador Giner (1986) focusing on the rise and consolidation of capitalism in Southern Europe with relation to the formation and shape of political regimes, state form, and legitimation. It is worthwhile to pay attention to some clairvoyant observations and analytical points developed by S. Giner, which may be seen, in my view, as the mainstream congruency on the issue.

After looking briefly from an historical perspective to some important economic and social structure factors involving the cultural legitimation of state power and authority in Southern European countries, the author refers to «the failure of the Enlightenment to erode significantly the inherited traditional world and its culture, both in the Iberian Peninsula and Italy». This common historical pattern adds to the continuity of religious allegiance -- still affecting contemporary political alignments in varying degrees according to country and region (op. cit.: 29-30) -- in shaping a historically «cultural polarization represented by the dichotomy

of religious traditionalism *versus* liberal radicalism» (op. cit.: 30-31). This cultural polarization encompassed, for instance, opposing attitudes toward industrialization and the spread of literacy, and the conception of social justice and public welfare. The rise of dictatorships in the first half of the twentieth century represented in some way the triumphant returning of the traditionalist pole. For instance, the Portuguese dictator Salazar «saw from the beginning the dangers of real 'modernity' for the stability of his own rule and quite successfully kept the population as ignorant as possible of the vain enticements of the industrial, technologically advanced, and secularized world» (op. cit.: 32-33).

However, to some extent, the twentieth-century reactionary regimes of Southern Europe combined public administration, political regime, and state apparatus in a novel way. They employed the state and the overloaded public administration to complement the weak efforts of private capital in the task of large-scale capital accumulation, massive industrialization, increased urbanization, and so forth (op. cit.: 36). In the end, transition from dictatorship to modern democracy did not occur through revolution. Instead, as in all cases examined by the author, but particularly in the case of Spain and Portugal, there has been «democratization from above». As the author insightfully remarks, a genuinely revolutionary break with the past did not even take place in Portugal in spite of the initial clamor for justice against the overthrown regime. This played a prominent role in the 1974 coup and in the eventual incorporation of a Socialist reform program in the constitution (op. cit.: 39). Almost all social forces in Southern Europe transitions from authoritarian rule «were obliged to enter into mutual agreement and concessions, leading to constitutional rule *under powerful surveillance from above or outside*» (emphasis by the author). Obviously, «outside» means the other Western European democracies and the United States. So that, apart from the rise of new institutions such as trade unions, and political institutions linked to parliamentary and constitutional democracy, the result of the transition process was that the inherited patterns of class domination and social inequality were respected by the new system of political praxis, leading, after all, to the same system that predominates in Western Europe (op. cit.: 40).

Thereby, Southern Europe finally entered into the «corporate world», but this occurred when its standards of living, income distribution, levels of urbanization, literacy, health service, and many other indicators were relentlessly approaching Northern European levels. That is, the gap had already started being bridged. In this regard, Giner's opinion was already very assertive when his paper was published in 1986: «by all international criteria, Southern Europe has now ceased to be part of the peryphery, or even of the semiperiphery, of the capitalist world economy» (op. cit.: 41). However, he adds, the acknowledgement of these important facts should not lead to simplistic assumptions about the «convergence» between Northern and Southern European societies. Why? At this point, it is worthwhile to follow the author's words:

«For one thing, the historical path followed by the former was by and large grounded on strong and prosperous civil societies. Despite the growth of the state and the recent development of corporate structures their internal equilibrium and order still largely depend on the strong living traditions of their civil societies. In the South, by contrast, civil society was always much weaker. As a consequence, the region as a whole reached the "corporate order" through a very different historical path, full of strife, stalemates, and confrontations. For another, the "advanced", industrialized, welfare-state capitalist core has been enlarged to cover Southern Europe without absorbing the class structures, local cultures, patronage systems, and other features of the new members into one single wider social system. These features may not have remained intact under recent urbanization and industrialization processes -- quite the contrary is the case -- but the repercussions have produced structural results that differ widely from those generated in the North. Even the very expansion of the capitalist core farther south has not forced the main centers of political and economic decision-making to shift elsewhere. Societal and geopolitical inequality in participation and influence in such spheres continues unabated. In other words, much integration (even some "convergence") has occurred at the level of corporate organization among European nations, but there has been hardly any at the level of class, community, privilege, and local power. In these areas, the Mediterranean societies of Europe continue to possess their own distinctiveness» (op. cit.: 41-42).

These insightful observations characterize, maybe better than my own words, the conditions that shaped the Portuguese polity that leads me to label it as a «late comer»/«post-

authoritarian» advanced society. Nevertheless, my purpose in using this idea in this piece is in essence fundamentally more descriptive and less analytical.

The contemporaneous return to democracy of Portugal, Spain, and Greece in the mid 1970's and their integration into the EC in the 1980's add to their common Southern European or Mediterranean geographical location -- meaning they share some historical, cultural, political, and economic and social development backgrounds -- in making them very appealing to form a basically cohesive, distinctive group within the European context for comparative political sciences and political economy studies. Depending on the point of view of the analyses, Italy is often included. Moreover, because the four Southern European Union democracies have a number of important cultural, social, economic, and historical characteristics in common, their political cultures and systems have often been seen as similar and representing a 'Mediterranean model of democracy'.

It is not my task to argue whether a 'Mediterranean model' of democracy can be discerned. Many authors argue that the democratic regimes of Portugal, Spain, and Greece (and Italy) are not similar enough to each other, nor different enough from other democratic regimes to fit a distinctive model of democracy and political culture. Hence one ought to discard the notion of a special Southern European democratic model.<sup>2</sup> However, these four countries have many characteristics in common, which is why they may represent a particularly inviting set of cases for political science comparative analysis. Actually, it is well known that they have all faced problems and even failures in sustaining stable democratic regimes in the past, and that they have all experienced more or less long interludes of authoritarian rule as a result. Together with Ireland in the EU Northern periphery, Greece, Spain and Portugal are economically less developed than most other EU nations. Still, Italy, Spain and Portugal have agricultural sectors characterised by *latifundia* in the south and small farms in the north, a division that strongly

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<sup>2</sup> When these four democratic regimes are compared with other democracies in terms of contrasting majoritarian and consensus models, they do not form a distinctive cohesive cluster (Lijphart *et alli* 1988). This is admitted by Lijphart *et alli* (1988) as an unexpected finding, which is an example of how prejudices often influence political sciences' comparative analysis on Southern European democracies.

influenced politics and internal development patterns. The three Latin countries still share a common and deeply rooted historical religious commitment to the Catholic church that is politically significant and has effected their political cultures. However, cumulative findings suggest that there are substantial differences among the four regimes, and clearly reveal the limitations and reductionism of some socio-economic and historico-cultural arguments. This is why I opted for giving the notion of «late comer»/«post-authoritarian» advanced society polity an essentially descriptive and non-theoretical scope to apply to the Portuguese polity case.

This notion highlights some features that give the two Iberian nations plus Greece a particular status in the European context, and which have broad consensus even among local scholars, usually more eager to emphasize national contrasts. (a) They belong to the economically less-developed group of EU nations, and its economic and productive systems show well-known trends of dependency in this context. These trends are reinforced by the geographical peripheral localization in Southern Europe and by common historical and cultural backgrounds in the «northern rim» of the Mediterranean civilizational area. (b) The late, *quasi*-simultaneous fall of respective dictatorial regimes followed by the transition to democracy that also allowed *quasi*-simultaneous processes of admittance into the EC in the early to mid 1980s, gave these nations the opportunity to expand economic development and modernization. In the Portuguese case, it recovered not only from the loss of the colonial empire, but also from the stigma of a late traditional society ruled for most of the twentieth century, particularly in the post-war period, by a backwards, traditionalist dictatorship inspired by ideas of self-sufficiency, home industry protectionism, rural populism, and by the authoritarian regimes that had been defeated in World War II.

Thus, they are all recent, «post-authoritarian» democracies in that in the mid 1970s they experienced a more or less disturbed process of regime transition from the authoritarian rule. In Portugal it started with a military *coup d'état*. The coup relied on wide people's support that quickly transformed into broad political, social, and grass roots upheavals and provided the background for revolutionary intents. After this, new parties had the opportunity to successfully revitalize general expectations from the new politics of democracy. They are also «late comers»



to the affluent «corporate world» of advanced society democracies that form the European Union. It is the congruency about this kind of European status, which Portuguese society shares with at least Spain and Greece, that leads me to define it, for analytical purposes, as a «late comer»/«post authoritarian» advanced society democracy.

It is not my task to systematically examine the similarities and differences among the Southern European democracies, or with those elsewhere either. Perhaps, this would be necessary if a comparison of political opportunity structures for the emergence of environmentalism and environmental movement patterns was the goal of my research. The fact is that most European work on new social movements and environmentalism has tended to ignore Southern European, less developed, and post-authoritarian democracies. The answer to the question whether there is a prime influence of national politics and political structures on environmental movement careers and patterns, or a causal link between advanced industrialism and the intensity of environmental protest, may benefit in being verified in Southern Europe nation-state cases. However, these cases have been left out from most theoretical and analytical constructs on this topic.

Indeed, collective action for the protection of nature and the environment remained an underestimated «secret» for Portuguese social sciences scholars, who showed more concern with other modernizing trends of Portuguese society. However, some aspects that characterize the emergence and further institutionalization of environmental movements in Northern Europe most industrialized nations are often mentioned to question whether a truly environmental movement has ever emerged in Portugal: (a) the lack of «peak» coordinating, political biased organizations following the model of 'green parties' of other central European countries; (b) the lasting non-emergence of strong, professionalized groups following the model of corporate environmental interest associations like those which became widely known at the international level through their spectacular actions and efficiency of lobbying activities; (c) the non-occurrence of broad mass protest actions socially and politically supportive of the emergence of one of the two alternatives.

Hypothetically, there has not been an important issue «opportunity» for the environmental movement to emerge as a well-organized and influential collective actor. We will see this is not true. Or maybe Portugal has either not enough public concern about environmental issues or there have been too few environmental problems in general. Although it would not be plausible to measure the degree of environmental degradation and pollution implied by the economic growth of the last decades, it is well known that, given the low levels and patterns of industrialization, most indicators of Portuguese industry «contribution» to global pollution are considered relatively low when compared with most industrialized countries.

As for an explanation for lower levels of environmental protest and organization, this contention recalls the simplistic and fallacious arguments of the «relative deprivation» approach. Recent reports on environmental issue events show that the Portuguese are not living in an environmental paradise (e.g. Schmidt 1993). On the contrary, local observers and experts have been emphasizing the lack of consistent and effective environmental policies, nature defence measures, and protection initiatives throughout the 1980s and early 1990s comparable to those pioneered by other industrialized nations. Moreover, the media has also often reported frequent and increasing environmental protest events by either grass roots citizen groups or movement organizations.

Although Portugal rates often below the European average as far as the importance and urgency given to environmental protection is concerned, a broad communicational process on environmental issues has recently developed. Successive governments, administration at the central and local level, several politico-administrative bodies, political parties, interest groups, economic entrepreneurs, scientific and scholarly bodies, mass-media, and *last but not least* environmental movement organizations, have all contributed to make the environmental question a strategic citizenship issue.<sup>3</sup>

These facts may not be surprising, and can probably be seen as a consequence of both the relative success of economic development and modernization in the last decade and of

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<sup>3</sup> Indeed, survey pools about people's concerns over environmental problems often surprise observers of Portuguese society (e.g. Schmidt 1993; and Lima and Schmidt 1996).

Portuguese commitments with the EC/EU on environmental policies. However, there are questions remaining about the patterns of collective action that pioneered and continue to push this move onwards. The first aim of this thesis is to gather information about environmental collective action and issue agendas since the advent of democracy in Portugal, and to reverse some unfounded prejudices about the local branch of the environmental movement. I hope this research will also contribute to better understanding the patterns of «new» movement politics in «late comer/post-authoritarian» advanced society democracies.

### **2.3. Political system and political culture**

On the eve of the adhesion to the EEC, Portugal was characterized by many social and political science analysts as an «intermediary» or «semi-peripheral» society, sharing simultaneously characteristics and traits of both advanced and underdeveloped societies (Santos 1993). In spite of the inclusion in the European area by geographical location, history, and culture (Cabral 1992), it was only by the mid 1980s that the adhesion to European Community definitely imposed a view of Portuguese society as an European nation, that is, a society sharing the essential European cultural values, and whose particularities, by comparison with the rest of the European nations, can be better expressed as «*differences of degree* -- and not of *nature*» (op. cit.: 944).

This view functioned as an optimistic screen counterbalancing some «negative» features of political, social, and economic structures still affecting the nation. However, some authors have proficiently maintained that structural features of differentiation of the nation's social, political, and economic structures at the very moment of adhering to EEC portrayed a wide gap between reality and the European modernity identity model. The societal weight of traditional value systems, the inefficiency of the administrative and judicature systems, and the excess of centralization of the state were often mentioned (Santos 1990; and 1994). Thereby, the political system tended to reflect in many ways the status and conditions of a «late comer» nation to the 'club' of advanced societies.

For instance, the parliamentary democracy in Portugal was said to have «not yet worn out its potentials of mobilization as such», as society continued to perform a «deficit of social movement» (Santos: 1994, 230). Actually, the political system persisted mirroring the historical conditions under which the democratic regime was formed. The polity was in a way constituted not only against the late authoritarian regime, but also against the strength of the Communist Party within the state via the participation of the armed forces and, specifically, military officers in political structures next to the *coup d'état* (Braga da Cruz 1994, and Barroso 1983: 81-3). Furthermore, the democratic consolidation had to be imposed against the proliferation of extremely demanding grass roots and «radical left» social movements in which «new» and «old» issues entwined (Santos: 1994, 230). Thus, when «new» issue movements emerged, they appeared submerged within the same wave of, and hardly distinct from, the «old» ones.

These observations point out that some factors of the political opportunity structure that are highlighted by the analysis of Portuguese society and political system proposed by Santos (1994). Many other students of Portuguese society agree with his characterization, though maybe not entirely with the analysis of historical roots, societal effects, and political consequences emphasized by the author.

The polity in Portugal is said by Santos (1994) to be characterized by the preeminence of «statism». In addition, «centralism», «authoritarianism», «clientelism», «bureaucratic redundancy», and «administrative inefficiency» prevail in the sphere of state action, which neither the democratic «revolution» of the mid 1970s, nor the process of modernization initiated by the mid 1980s managed to eradicate. The principle of the market never reached the same hegemonic stand in Portugal as in central nations. It always remained under the tutelage of the principle of the state. Although this tutelage recently began to attenuate, the initiative started more often than not from the state itself. Furthermore, the materialization of civil society by means of the organization of social classes -- mainly the bourgeoisie and the working class -- never achieved the same standards, intensity, and structural impact in Portugal as in central nations. In general, civil society is usually considered weak due to this deficit of corporate interest organization from both sides. Conversely, civil society is considered stronger in what

concerns the role of family structures and solidary networks borne upon kinship and neighborhood. This ended up representing a relevant complement for the restrictive scope of welfare state accomplishments, and it made up for several welfare state omissions and weaknesses, making the author to use the expression «welfare civil-society» (op. cit.: 85-6).

Strictly speaking, there is no autonomous regulation of corporate interests, and the state always takes precedence over civil society in all aspects of mutual interaction. Moreover, because it was not possible to integrate the working classes in the political system by means of strong and autonomous union and political organizations, in the author's view, the democratization of the political system still presents some restrictions (Santos 1994: 86). For instance, democracy hardly eradicated clientelism and authoritarianism of the state, and the state never really compromised welfare for lower classes in order to become a full welfare-state (*ibid.*). A suitable example of the tradition of authoritarianism in public administration was the fact that many social rights achieved during the «times of revolution» had never been internalized by state administration nor by those entitled. They were viewed by both as a kind of gift from the state (Santos 1990: 225). This means that two of the most important goals of modernity, that is, resource redistribution and democratization of the political system, have not entirely succeeded (Santos 1994: 87).

While the state kept exhibiting strong authoritarian patterns, paradoxically, primacy, autonomy, and authoritarianism of the state have been often used in promoting modernization of society, although this trend led more often than not to only a simulacrum of modernization in many sectors (op. cit.: 87). Actually, many purposes aimed by policy legislation or by ordinary and constitutional laws were barely implemented or translated into adequate social practices. An example which is especially important for enlarging environmental groups' scope of action, was the case of the well-known «class action» right. This right was guaranteed by the constitutional law since 1976, but never could really be used by those entitled because it has never been regulated by, nor inscribed in, ordinary law (Miranda 1994: 365; Sousa 1994: 419). The deficit of implementation of environmental laws, regulations, and EC directives were additional examples.

At the level of its juridical-institutional sphere the state strengthened and multiplied its means of action. It enlarged administration services and bureaucracy to extend formalization and state control to several domains of social life, whereas in practice heavy bureaucracies, decision-making omissions, and fragmented forms of action often blocked the effectiveness of policy-making. This led the state to frequently operate by default, that is, to ignore its own policy orientations or its legal and institutional framework. Thus, state action and regulatory completion was in many circumstances discretionary, whereas legislation often was selectively enforced or made for particular «clients» or events. Even international commitments frequently lasted too a long time to implement (Santos 1990: 135-142).

Furthermore, the enlargement of bureaucracy and technical services within the administration aimed at empowering the state with the means of self-sufficiency and autonomy in decision-making. Participation and consultation of collective actors and interest groups, even in compulsory cases by law, was usually carried out as an informal and non-institutionalized mode of gathering interest groups' to foster legitimacy of decision-making processes, whose procedures were mainly internal to the state. The environmental policy domain once again had plenty of examples. For instance, the participation of the public, citizen interest groups, and environmental organizations was often considered to be very scarce, particularly in the public discussions of EIA processes, because the public and collective actors did not believe their participation had any influence on decision-making (Chito and Caixinhas 1993). As a matter of fact, a lot of developing and infrastructure projects carried out by either private or public developers in the early 1990's had been approved or were already in progress before environmental impact assessment reports were ready for public consultation and discussion (*ibid*; Amaral 1994: 374; Schmidt 1993: 25-9).

Hence, *statism* induces a sort of political mentality within people and within economic, political, and social actors which overloads public authorities with the resolution of all kinds of problems, while neglecting individual or private initiative and responsibility. This mentality is the other side of *centralism* and *paternalism* of the state and political actors towards citizen autonomous initiative. Yet, it fosters dependency of economic and citizen's collective actors

from the state's initiative and protection, promoting the old stereotype of economic *protectionism* and *social paternalism* prevalent in the Portuguese economy and social modern history. Furthermore, initiatives from civil society and economic interest actors were often promoted by the state as practical *clientelism*.

Most of these features, though not entirely the analysis made by Santos (1994), are corroborated by other students of Portuguese society and polity. For instance, Marques and Ferreira (1991) studied the structure and institutionalization of the «social bargaining» system during the last two decades in Portugal and concluded that one has to take in consideration: (1) the «influence of half a century of authoritarian political regime and lack of tradition in autonomous organization of interests and interest bargaining independent from the state»; (2) the «specificity of the democratic consolidation process»; and (3) «the relative inability of Portuguese society to generate enough economic resources that should facilitate compatibility of opposing interests» (op. cit.: 23). Actually, despite the gradual increase of autonomy by private sectors of the economy as regards to state assistance and protection, many enterprises -- particularly small and medium-sized ones, which correspond to the majority of the productive sector of the economy -- repeatedly demanded technical and financial support from the state in order to solve financial problems and avoid bankruptcy; to exempt from, or facilitate, payment of taxes; to maintain employment levels; or to enhance competitiveness in international markets (Mozzicafreddo 1992; and 1996).

Moreover, the deficit and evolution of welfare-state accomplishments were also explained by researchers in this area due to *centralism* encroached in the functioning of the political system (Mozzicafreddo 1992: 83). Hence, the welfare-state system was described as a non-universal, instrumental, selective, fragmented, and often discretionary set of policy initiatives, wherein «a clientelistic logic in the resolution of social and economic problems prevails, though in the context of a political regime based upon representative legitimacy» (*ibid.*).

Scholars still remarked how *bureaucracy* and *centralism* of the political system, adding to financial austerity imposed by the central state, blocked sometimes the functioning of the local level political system. Although viewed as an important and positive dimension of, and

contribution to, expanding and deepening democracy, the local administration political system also shared some of the features of its counterpart at the national level, such as: a deep gap between goals inscribed in legal and institutional framework of local power and its real functioning; local politics nearly dominated by party politics; and the preference of local administrators for personal and non-institutional relationships with local citizenry (Mozzicafreddo *et alli* 1991). Obviously, the latter aspect can be interpreted as a soft reference to *clientelism* at the local level of the political system.

However, it has to be recognized that the political regime *strictus sensus* has been doing well in many aspects. In 1975, Portugal began to recover from the loss of the colonial empire and from the post-1974 revolutionary situation. Performing initially high levels of electoral participation, and despite patterns of electoral volatility (Matos 1992), the trends of left-right polarization within the party system have been counterbalanced by the confirmation of the two parties at the center of the political spectrum as the strongest ones in terms of electoral score, political influence, and ability to form cabinets. After the mid 1980s, governmental stability was achieved and the slow but steady recovery of the economy allowed for a successful integration into the European Community.

Actually, the functioning of the political system was strongly motivated by the European Union, and policy-making seems, in general, to have displayed an European dimension. The attainment and use of structural funds made available by the EU proved to be quite efficient. Interest groups, including unions, corporate groups, and environmental associations knew the «corridors» of Brussels, and all seem to have benefited from participating in EU politics. Meanwhile, many efforts have been made to integrate EU directives and commitments, environmental policies and legislation included.

Nevertheless, in his critical analysis of social, economic, and political consequences of the European option and integration, Barreto (1994) calls our attention to some perverse effects of the European integration upon democratic practices of political institutions. In the author's view, these effects strengthened the centralism of the state and the autonomy of state administration in decision-making to the detriment of other political instances, including the



parliament. The negotiations with European Union institutions and complexity of EU political issues was often an excuse to concentrate decision-making at high levels of the administration (Barreto 1994: 1066). This view is shared by other analysts of the political system in Portugal. Vitorino (1995) also emphasizes that the dynamics of European integration had considerably strengthened the weight of techno-bureaucracy to the detriment of other instances of decision-making, mostly due to developing direct interfaces between national and European administrative structures (op. cit: 337).

Of course, economic plans and policy measures elaborated by the government and state administration were, in general, subjected to consultations of interest associations, local administrations, unions, corporate interests, and other interest groups. However, consultation processes were separate and cannot be considered as an alternative to genuine political debate. Scattered consultations were also no good enough to substitute participation, negotiation, and shared responsibility. Thus, although EU institutions have stimulated social bargaining and the politics of social interest negotiation, the European integration did not equally stimulated political democracy as such. Because of such strong traditions of old-corporatism, these processes had often enhanced subordination of other political instances, the parliament itself included (Barreto 1994: 1065-6). European institutions had found a very weak civil society and a secretive state hardly accessible to the citizenry in Portugal, a problem aggravated by the absence of a strong tradition of democratic culture due to the youth of democracy (op. cit 1994: 1067).

Thus, while civil society remained weak and the parliament a relatively subordinate entity, public administration kept reproducing old habits of secretiveness and bureaucratic functioning. In support of this kind of judgment, the administration of European funds is always called as an illustration. Having been mostly administered without any sort of participation by civil society, autonomous organizations, or by elected representative bodies other than the government itself, it is said that European funds enhanced clientelism, particularly within technical services of the administration (op cit.: 1068). It is true that, under the influence and pressure of its EC/EU counterparts, some sectors of state administration have recently reached

considerable levels of modernization. However, in most areas, including those now achieving modernization, secretiveness still prevailed. Preparatory studies and assessments were not publicized and citizens' demands were often ignored. The modernization of the administration has not only been partial, but mostly internal and merely functional. Moreover, this process has completely ignored the interfaces of state administration towards the public, thereby further demoralizing the autonomization of civil society with regards to state action (*ibid.*).

The author's account regarding the performance of Portuguese democracy since Portugal had become a member of the EU is, indeed, very deceptive and delusive. Nevertheless, he recognizes that persistent administrative and entrepreneurial practices, which in their essence were non-democratic, have been positively affected when in contact with European institutions and when pressured to promote openness and modernization. Moreover, the European contribution for development in Portugal has been extremely relevant and, hence, an indirect support of the democratic regime has undoubtedly resulted. However, the balance of its political influence towards improving democracy would have, in many aspects, perverse effects. Modernization of state administration was markedly technical and functional, having no parallel in terms of accessibility by the public and the citizenry, and participation of citizen autonomous organizations. Within a context of few democratic traditions, a subordinate parliament, fragile representative organizations, and a weak civil society in Portugal the EU framework and institutions have involuntarily encouraged old political and administrative habits (*op.cit.*: 1069).

These action patterns within the state sphere, which are highlighted by many other students of Portuguese polity, have roots in a long-lasting authoritarian state and state interventionism tradition in both the economy and society. These patterns persisted during and after the revolution of 1974 in the internal structure of the state; in the configuration of the political system; and in the preeminent role of the state in the economy, particularly through weight of public economy.<sup>4</sup> It still prevails due to the state role as decisive promoter of development and modernization.

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<sup>4</sup> The weight of public economy started decreasing by the late 1980s, when an intensive program of privatizations began.

Other students also emphasize that the evolution towards a welfare state system in Portugal has to be analysed stressing political processes initiated in 1974. One must also consider that fast changing processes of political, social, economic development and modernization, including changes within the state sphere have occurred within a specific societal context of intermediate development. Sharing some characteristics of more advanced democratic societies, Portugal continued to exhibit insufficiencies, asymmetries, and discrepancies common in less developed societies. The state structure according to the rule of law and the transformation of social and economic relations has developed at a different pace compared to other European societies (Mozzicafreddo 1992: 59-60). The forms of state intervention in the economy and in regulatory functions of economic relations have to be analyzed emphasizing the role of the state as a decisive actor in development achievements after the post-1974 era. The welfare state system in Portugal is in many aspects subsumed by the functional role of the state both in stimulating economic growth and as a factor of social integration (op. cit.: 57). *Contraction* indicators concerning the weight of the state in the economy co-exist with *expansion* indicators of its role as regulator of social and economic relations (op. cit.: 58). That is, contraction of the state as an economic actor means often the expansion of direct intervention in many spheres of social and economic relations into levels that go beyond a simple role of being a regulatory actor.

Excess of state interventionism in exercising regulatory functions are often justified by its promotional role of economic and social development and by its strategic role as lead actor in the modernization of society and in European integration (Mozzicafreddo et alli 1994). This context frequently led to paradoxical situations. Interest groups and unions often criticized state action for blocking autonomization and democratization of decision-making process. However, they also criticize the state for not being eager enough in promoting the necessary adaptations and compensations in order to counterbalance the inevitable instability, conflict, and adaptation problems resulting from industrial change and modernisation of social and economic relations. That is, for not carrying out more stringent initiatives in social and economic policies.

It has to be said that the two kinds of criticism do not necessarily correspond to common splits between unions and corporate interest groups, the former usually more statist and the latter commonly more liberal. Depending on the circumstances and issues, each kind of criticism may come equally from both sides. Although this may be explained by asymmetries and discrepancies of the economic structure, and by the deficit of international integration of the economy, it also suggests the internalization of a *statist* political culture by most interest groups and collective actors concerning the role of the state in society. Instability of economic development conditions may have converged with institutional inertia of state structures, problems in stabilizing the political system, and reconstructing democracy. These factors all contributed to the deficit of civil society autonomy in political culture.

#### **2.4. Party system and civil society**

A peculiarity of democratic consolidation in Portugal after 1974 is that it imposed not only against the late «right wing» dictatorial regime, but also against left revolutionary radicalism that emerged after April 1974 (Braga da Cruz 1988: 99). Moreover, the consolidation of democracy represented the consolidation of political parties' domain over most spheres of political and public life (Rebelo de Sousa 1982; Bruneau et alli 1986; Braga da Cruz 1988: 101, and 103). Besides specific circumstances of the democratic transition, the overall imposition of political parties over state institutions, bureaucracy, and interest group organizations is neither a novelty of Portuguese polity nor too much of a surprise.

Next to the military *coup*, the old-corporatist complex of the late dictatorial regime has been dissolved and spontaneously replaced by a grass roots, voluntaristic, non-hierarchical wave of associational collective action, which suddenly made Portugal possibly the most profoundly pluralistic associational polities of that time.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, dozens of political movements and parties

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<sup>5</sup> There is a lot of literature about the issue, particularly for English readers. Bruneau et alli (1986) may be credited as an excellent account of the political system and internal politics in Portugal covering the post-revolutionary period until the adhesion to the EEC. For an historical and event-oriented account see Reis (1996).

have been founded the day after. Union activity exploded and neighborhood and workers' committees (the so-called *comissões de moradores* and *comissões de trabalhadores*) sprang up spontaneously everywhere. Firms were taken over by workers and managed by cooperatives or worker's committees. In southern rural areas peasants and wage workers formed their own organizations and initiated a radical process of agrarian reform, which had borne upon cooperative administration of large estates that had been taken over and expropriated by the state.

Anarchic proliferation of groups, movements, and associations seeking new forms of political participation quickly replaced the one-party system of the *Estado Novo* regime. Supported by a well-organized Communist Party or by dozens of radical left political organizations and, above all, by the Army Forces Movement that had led the coup, this move began an attempt to install forms of «popular power» into the political system in 1975. The revolutionary intent envisaged decentralization of political power, with neighbourhood people assemblies and workers' committees at the local level, and a people's national assembly as the supreme revolutionary body. Had it come anywhere near implementation, it would have made Portugal a revolutionary state unique in the Western world (Bruneau et alli 1986: 99-100). Thanks to unequivocal concentration of electoral support of the people to the Socialist Party and the Popular Democratic Party, and strategic convergence from both parties regarding the political regimen, the revolutionary model was replaced by a liberal democratic regime in which political parties have since assumed the predominant role.

While many legacies of both the late authoritarian regime and the revolutionary period survived for many years, such as the paramount role of the state in the economy and the politicization of the media, the ongoing group proliferation of groups did not. Actually, groups and associations that had emerged in the revolutionary period have by and large not been consolidated. Rather, after membership in social and cultural organizations have slightly increased, the overall trend has been for a decrease throughout the last few years, particularly in more politically biased types of organizations. On the contrary, the lack of associational and

non-party political activity in the civil society sphere seems to be more a legacy of the former regime (Bruneau et alli 1986: 100).

Groups and associations were not actively discouraged by the political system installed since 1976. The Constitution of 1976 and its successive versions after the first revision in 1982, actively supported the formation of autonomous organizations by the citizenry. However, a relatively low level of group formation and individual participation in group activities is visible in all survey data available (e.g. Braga da Cruz 1995). A continuing process of disorganization, conflict, and monopolization by political parties of institutional arenas available for influencing decision and policy making within the political system prevailed. Groups and associations seemed to have a relatively minor role in influencing policy making over the last twenty years. Groups were not created or directed from above, as they had been in the *Estado Novo*, and opportunities existed for their formation, but they did not assume prominent roles in the political system (Bruneau et alli 1986: 100-1). Besides, in consonance with the relatively limited role that groups and associations have been playing in internal politics from then on, few people joined groups. Moreover, associations with more obvious political implications, such as the unions and owners' associations, just followed political party cleavages.

The creation of social bargaining and «concertation» arenas at the peak level in 1983 was viewed by many students as not much more than a prelude to «neo-corporatism», even after some changes that were introduced in 1989, when the Economic and Social Council was created (Braga da Cruz 1995: 359; Mozzicafredo 1992: 60-1, and 1996). The Economic and Social Council is a permanent peak institution for social bargaining, in which unions and owners' interest groups participated. Its functioning and political role was symptomatic of how interests were represented and articulated. Social bargaining at the peak level was limited to discussing governmental proposals concerning either long term plans of economic development, or social and employment policies (Braga da Cruz 1995: 359). It was considered an attempt of the government to gain legitimacy and obtain the support of social partners for economic and social policy orientations. The process was strongly constrained and largely ineffective. The government continued to be the central actor of social bargaining at the peak level and, at this

level, there was no truly autonomous negotiation between corporate and labour interests (Mozzicafredo 1992: 79-83; and 1996: Chapter 3).

Thus, there must undoubtedly be some other, more informal, means for groups to have access to the government. They remained, however, unclearly defined in the political system. After the old-corporatism of the *Estado Novo* and the utopian «power to the people» of the revolution, «all power to the parties» (Bruneau et alli 1986: 6-7) became the rule that shaped the political system in Portugal. The party system had been structured to monopolize political life, while participation of interest groups remained restricted. Political parties emerged as the main agents defining the regime and invaded all sectors of public life. They have successfully infiltrated so many aspects of Portuguese society that one may imagine few public officers or social institutions not subject to their action. The role of the state in society and the economy adds to the complete control political parties have over the labor movement. Parties have nearly monopolized public political life in Portugal (op. cit.: 7). Actually, parties' power extended well beyond political institutions *per se* to affect other important society sectors. Moreover, it was at the origins of an inextricable symbiosis among state, government, and parties in the media, banks and financial system, and in many strategic industrial sectors. After having been nationalized and introduced to intervention by the revolution, these areas quickly turned into part of the political battle between parties until the late 1980s (op. cit.: 11).

Yet, the place for small parties within the party system was reduced too. There seemed to be negligible potential for minor parties to grow into major parties and the only means available in which they could survive was in coalition with one of the four major parties (op. cit.: 29). As noted by Rebelo de Sousa (1982) it was the major parties -- particularly the Socialist Party and the Social-Democratic Party -- that saw advantages in establishing a voting system that not only allowed them to perpetuate, but also reduced the likelihood of smaller party formations to achieve parliamentary representation. Although parties do not have to obtain a minimum score of votes either at the local or national level to ensure representation in parliament, the electoral system tends to favour larger parties and those able to form viable coalitions. It includes not only proportional representation, but also the use of the d'Hondt method of the highest average for

distributing seats. Moreover, only political parties may present candidates either for the assembly of the republic or local governments. The system has functioned efficiently for the four big parties, in particular for those in the centre of the political *spectrum*.

The revision of the Constitution in 1982, besides having concentrated on removing military bodies from direct participation in politics, had dealt essentially with the ambiguous role and competence ascribed to the president of the republic, whose interference in executive power until the mid 1980s was considered unacceptable and highly contested by centre and right wing parties (Braga da Cruz 1994; Vitorino 1995: 329-31). However, the trend to strengthen the parliamentary bias and stabilization of the four «founder» parties system (Vitorino 1995: 334) did not avoid the parliament and parties to lose some prestige (Bruneau et alli 1986: 146-64). Meanwhile, disputes over media control, namely of the electronic media by the government<sup>6</sup> (op.cit: 165-80) added to the role of the state in the economy and the weight of the public economy (op. cit.: 181-97) in strengthening centrality of the state over many sectors of society. State centralism and supremacy could then be justified by the quest for a stable and efficient government, given difficulties in a cabinet remaining for a complete legislative term (Bruneau et alli 1986: 118-26). The trends to enhance parliamentarism of the political system sought by constitutional revisions accentuated the «governmentalization» of the politico-administrative system and the centralization of the state (Vitorino 1995: 349).

Parties became, thus, the principal axis of interest and political mediation within the political system, and they shaped the functioning of political institutions -- e.g. the government, parliament, state agencies, etc. -- on the basis of majority and oligarchic, instead of negotiation and participatory methods and practices (Braga da Cruz 1995b). Moreover, at the internal, organizational level, party structures are borne upon intense group activity, which favours the creation of party oligarchies and tends to block party interaction with society.

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<sup>6</sup> The media system in Portugal has strongly liberalized and privatized since the late 1980s, but ideological leaders of political parties still play an important role in the media as opinion makers (Paquete de Oliveira 1995: 379).



Until the mid 1980s, achieving electoral majorities was very difficult. This caused many governability problems, which gradually weakened the power of the state and of the government. However, the weakness of political power during that period did not increase civil society autonomous organizations, either by getting rid of state tutelage or by overwhelming party representation of social interests. Instead of being a stimulus for strengthening the growth and initiative of interest articulation, autonomous citizen groups, economic actors, and local administrations, the weakness and inefficiency of governments seemed rather to have caused anxiety and institutional blockage. Therefore, parties remained a unique channel for representation of diversity in a changing complex society, while civil society was unable to do without the tutelage of the state (Freire 1985: 12-4).

Actually, while unions and interest groups remained faithful to original party dependence and alignment (Braga da Cruz 1995b: 409-24) other interest sectors of society hardly found convenient political channels to articulate demands. By the mid to late 1980s, the situation was extremely deceptive. After complaining about the abuse of state interference in the economy and civil society sphere, most interest sectors, including small and gross businesses, traders, industries, corporate groups, farmers, co-operatives, and local governments, were all eager to protest about the lack of protection by the state in face of free competition rules imposed by the adhesion to the EEC (Freire 1985: 11). Consumer associations and co-operatives had widely expanded and some of them even achieved high levels of membership. However, they did not achieve to form really a movement for the quality of mass consumption -- for the most part they just trusted largely inefficient inspection services of the state. Housing co-operatives and tenant associations, a sector with very large membership, only solved individual housing and legal problems of the members. They rarely took the initiative in policy-making if there were no concrete situations worthy of protest. Farmers, which had in the near past protested the statism of southern agrarian reform, were now protesting free market rules for the sector, claiming for subsidies, price guarantees, and market controls from the state. As for youth and student movements, youth organizations of political parties exerted a strong and effective control of representation channels both in university and high schools. Similarly, the women's movement

remained a prisoner of state agencies and party organizations dedicated to gender discrimination and women's issues. Within the cultural field, where in spite of several handicaps due to chronic lack of economic resources one can always find revitalising moments of artistry and imagination, state aid was essential for the economic survival of the cinema, theatre, book publishing, arts, music, etc.

By the mid 1980s, as Freire (1985: 12) insightfully noticed, it seemed that only two sectors of citizen autonomous action had enough dynamics and resources to guarantee independence and autonomy in face of party mediation and the state: religious movements -- and the author was excluding the Catholic Church -- and sports. Counting on ambitious civic entrepreneurs, they seemed to be the sole movements which expanded and achieved autonomous economic sustainance. Thereby, they developed strong collective identity and a symbolic imagery, and were able to feed their own press, which allowed them to gradually increase membership (Freire 1985: 12).

All analyses focusing on the inner dynamics of civil society, political culture, and social values of Portuguese population towards political and social participation in the period ended up being very deceptive (e.g. Braga da Cruz 1995a and 1995b: 333-67). Subordination, paternalism, and statism remained the structural, invariable traits of political culture, which can admittedly be said as having its origins in a long lasting authoritarian political regime (Braga da Cruz 1995a: 353). And after the momentous break of the revolutionary transition in 1974-76, its continuity has been ensured by the functioning and structure of the political system.

As a matter of fact, all surveys over social participation in public and political activities - - mainly participation in associations and group activism -- converged in showing that it was much lower in Portugal than in the rest of Europe (e.g. Braga da Cruz 1995a; Ashford and Timms 1992). Furthermore, they all stressed a profound lack of confidence in institutions and, most of all, a deep sense of powerlessness in face of governmental and state decision-making. The levels of adhesion to trade unions, which increased greatly around 1974, began to decay after the late 1970s, even though entrepreneurial association membership increased in some economic sectors (Braga da Cruz 1995a: 358). Even standard forms of participation in

mainstream politics were said to have decreased due to decaying trends of party identity and ideology crisis; to personalization of politics; and because of the ongoing non-coincidence between social and political cleavages. Therefore, an increase of abstentionism was registered -- although deficient updating of electoral lists made it hard to measure -- which was paralleled by symptoms of electoral volatility (Braga da Cruz 1995a: 360-8).

The «deficit» of civil society in Portuguese polity of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which most local observers and social scientists relate to contingency of contemporary history and structural features of Portuguese society, stands, thus, for the minor role ascribed to non-party collective actors in interest articulation and political representation. The ascendancy of party politics, state centralism, dependence of interest groups upon state aid, and the shape of political system structures over the last decades added to prevalent non-participatory traits of political culture as main factors underlying the «deficit of new social movements» (Santos: 1994, 230) attached to contemporary Portuguese society.

## **2.5. The institutional design of environmental policy-making**

Environmental policy is a complex area in which expertise is of fundamental importance. Complexity and economic impact of environmental policies justify also why industry is expected to have an important role in the field, acting along with the government in policy formulation, decision-making, and implementation. Apart from owning the necessary technical knowledge and being, in general, closely linked to expertise, the interests of most productive sectors are directly affected by environmental regulations.

In Portugal, industry certainly has great relevance within the environmental policy field too. However, like other actors of the field -- namely expert organizations, and environmental groups, which otherwise are recognized by law as 'social partners' -- industrial associations did not enjoy full institutionalized participation in the policy-making process. This does not mean that industrialists, environmental movement organizations, and other actors did not participate in the process. The point is that the mode of policy decision-making and its institutional design,

which was also prevalent in other policy domains, gave the administrative system an hegemonic role, thereby reflecting political procedures long established within the political system.

By institutional design I basically mean the specific patterns of relationship between the state and interest actors within a given politico-administrative framework, which ultimately result from specific historical and structural developments. Institutions and relationship patterns between state and non-state actors impose certain types of problem resolution, interest accommodation in policy and decision-making processes, when selecting actors and modes of participation in policy formulation and implementation.

Aguilar (1993) identifies two main types of policy-making institutional design. The «corporatiste» mode is a «co-operative design, in which public and private actors co-operate in the process of policy formation and implementation». This type resembles «the social model based on the association with its principle of organised concertation», basically corresponding to the environmental political process model in Germany. In contrast, the «statist» mode, is a «non co-operative design, in which public actors play the leading role in the political sphere without significantly taking private actors into account». This type resembles «the social model based on the state, or the bureaucracy, with its principle of hierarchical control», and is illustrated by the environmental political and policy-making processes prevailing in Spain (op. cit.: 225). Although admitting this dichotomy is an over-simplification, I would add that, consistently with previous analysis and apart from some slightly punctual differences, the latter was also the model prevailing in Portugal during the period of analysis.

However, in the case of European «late comer» democracies - and maybe in the other EU nations cases too - the EU has a powerful position in national environmental policies. It became increasingly important in creating common political frames and binding normative structures, rendering national environmental policies somehow meaningless. States seem to be loosing their independence as actors in the environmental policy domain, which makes environmental policies a fully-fledged example for the «European Union as a regulatory state» argument (Majone 1994). Whether this leads to a resulting loss of autonomy and to some kind of convergence among environmental national policies is an open question. Not only is the

influence of national agendas in the EU diverged from one country to another, but the implementation of EU legislation, national policy-making processes, and institutional designs that are set up for the formation of policies show also significant variation.

Although the influence of the EU on institutional designs of environmental policy might be especially salient in «late comer» nations like Portugal, the low significance that the EU has attached to the control of policy implementation in member states in comparison to formal transposition of EU environmental directives, explains in part the continuity of established internal institutional designs in this «new» policy domain. The discretionary nature of directives in relation to means chosen for their realization allowed for a less severe control of environmental policy implementation, one that is largely channeled through a system resting on citizen and group complaints to the Commission (Aguilar 1993: 227). This usually anticipates direct monitoring.

Portugal, along with Spain, Greece and Italy, are long known as the group of EU countries with the highest degree of non-fulfillment in environmental legislation (op. cit.: 229). Not by coincidence, they are said to have *dirigiste* administrative designs for the fulfillment of environmental policy, meaning that administrations do not co-operate with interest groups in a formal way (op. cit.: 228). Thus, the discretionary nature of directives, along with difficulties underlying the enforcement of environmental policy at the national level, have led to a significant deficit in implementation of EU environmental policy. However, these difficulties should also enhance co-operation of the government and the administration with industry and environmental collective actors.

In the absence of a tradition of self-regulation, private government, and institutionalized co-operation, policy processes in Portugal tended to be essentially carried out by the government within the administrative system. A network of advisory bodies and organisms of the administration, composed mainly by experts internal to the ministries involved in the issue, usually prepared by their own policy and bill proposals which ministers and state secretaries should decide upon. Interest groups, industrials, external experts, and associations were consulted following the discretionary will of governmental actors, and very often the scope of

selection depended upon the political alignment of the government or specific group lobbying. Quite often, groups had no other alternative than protesting in the public sphere, which more often was the case for environmental groups. Or lobbying channels were made available by the *clientelistic* mode of relationships between the administration and civil society.

It must be said that this alternative was not exclusive to industry groups, since more influent environmental groups also absorbed the seasonable know-how that facilitated the channel opening for exerting pressure and influence upon policy-makers and the government. However, they mostly acted in the public sphere in order to influence policy formulation and decision-making processes, which they often could only follow from the outside. Of course, they all were informed by governmental actors when a final decision was to be made, and they all were allowed to present them their comments, opinions, and claims. But when consultation was made compulsory by law, the time left for contesting was short enough to prevent groups from preparing technically and scientifically well-grounded alternative proposals. Frequently, when issues were not specific to the environmental policy field, although having eventually notorious environmental impact, environmental groups were not directly consulted. Their only other alternative left was utilizing protest actions and public argumentation via the media.

Because it was difficult to introduce the environmental sector as an autonomous policy field and it remained a low political priority, co-operation with private actors in policy formation and implementation was almost non-existent. Voluntary agreements between the government and industries were rare until recently. Compromises existed involving government and industries, for instance, in environmental pacts and technology modernization programs. When this was the case, they were even given wide publicity so that the public could see how both the government and industries were committed to modernization efforts, with the government acting as the ultimate guarantor.

Experts who are also supposed to be an influential actor in environmental policy, entered the policy formation process only if they belonged to, or they were directly co-opted by the administration. Expert commissions were occasionally set up, or the enrollment of experts in advisory bodies was decided when there was not enough expertise on specific issues within the

administration. However, institutionalized participation of independent expertise in policy-making was not a customary practice because the administration always accounted for expertise self-sufficiency. When the occasion was made, experts were preferably co-opted individually, in order to guarantee the «adequate» political profile of those selected.

The control and autonomy of state actors was, thus, a clear pattern of policy-making processes in environmental policy. The government and administrative bodies played a predominant role, and neither institutionalized relationships, nor permanent co-operation existed among public, private, and association actors. In pollution control policy there was not, therefore, a permanent and specific organism that allowed for participation of industrial representatives, nor was there any commission to articulate environmental policies. The relationships between environmental policy-makers and industries remained mainly informal and punctual. On the contrary, participation of industry sectors in environmental policy-making was basically done by the mediation of state actors of the industry development policy sector.

However, unlike the environmental association field, there was not many complaints by industry sectors about not having been consulted by the government on policy-making processes in the environmental field. The low political priority status of this area and the governments' caution in not going too fast made authorities' and industry's interest to converge.

The emergence of *environmental pacts* and the formulation of environmental adaptation plans containing binding measures, relying on financial support from state and EU funds, started producing a qualitative change in the practice and institutional design of environmental policy-making. Pacts and adaptation implied the establishment of a regular dialogue involving the administration and industries, which resulted in institutionalized co-operative supervision by the administration and industries. This converged in the interest of both, in that a regular adjustment between actions of public and private actors was needed to align the government's cleaning plans and anti-pollution initiatives by the industries.

However, it did not change the fundamental institutional design described so far. The use of voluntary measures by the industries continued to be still rare, and the state still maintained ascendancy over private initiative even in issues in which the state was supposed to play a

simple regulatory role. Environmental policy-making processes reflected, thus, the separation between public and private actors, as if a mutual distrust existed between them. The weaknesses of interest articulation favoured the persistence of the statist design.

Nevertheless, some kinds of advisory bodies were opened to direct participation of industry, expertise, and citizen representatives, particularly in environmental agencies. The basic law for the environment determined the participation of environmental groups in policy making processes of this domain since 1987. Thereby, this policy domain began pioneering «new» forms of openness to civil society and consensus gathering in policy-making. However, initiatives taken in this direction initially seemed to avoid further politicization of this policy domain and to define it as rather an expertise, a-political domain. The fact that collective actors of this sector lacked significant political impact and self-declared as a-political groups, and that opposition parties did not contest the secondary priority status ascribed to this policy domain had highly contributed to define the environmental policy domain as mainly a technical and de-politicized policy sector.

However, as a result of their well-grounded discourse and participation in policy issue debates, environmental groups gradually strengthened their status in the public sphere of environmental politics. After receiving funding for research activities, they improved their mobilization skills, technical and scientific expertise, and public recognition. They started then being regularly called by the ministry for informal consultation about important environmental issues in the course of decision-making processes. However, this remained scarce in what concerns developing and industrial regulation issues which, in spite of expectable environmental impact, fell under the competence of other ministries.

Changes in the opportunity structure for institutional group participation began in the mid 1980s. When the environment policy field gained ministry status it gradually effected the institutional design of policy-making. The participation of environmental groups in policy-making has then clearly improved. However, the deficit of environmental policy implementation contributed to shape this policy domain more into a field of contention than co-operation.



## **2.6. Environmental policy and development**

Commitments resulting from European Community adhesion, which made the state compromise with EC environmental policy orientations, are certainly the most decisive factor for improving the nation environmental standards and performance. I would even add that the European integration factor had also played an important role in introducing new opportunities and enhancing institutional paths of participation for the citizenry in policy and decision-making processes. In particular, it introduced the opportunity to institutionalize the participation of environmental associations in policy-making. Thereby, this factor has also been important in strengthening organizational and political resources of the environmental movement «industry» and in facilitating its political and social integration.

However, financial aid made available by the European Community to regional infrastructure and economic development had also contributed to environmental deterioration over the territory, since most developing policy initiatives by the Portuguese administration have been carried out regardless of most basic rules for minimizing inherent environmental impacts.

An overview of how environmental protection has been gradually entering legislation in Portugal and about the evolution of institutional structures set up for state action in this policy sector will help us to follow the course of environmental policy in relation to economic and social development processes.

Initially made up of disperse and isolated policy initiatives, the consolidation of this field as a truly policy domain would start gradually taking place in the second half of the 1980s. Adding to the EC adhesion, other factors had also contributed to the relevance that environmental issues gained in policy-making. First, the environmental crisis had already entered political and policy agendas of most Western governments and international agencies. Second, the visibility of environmental damages resulting from economic development and industrial growth was increasingly motivating protests by local populations, public opinion, and environmental groups. Environmental groups were particularly eager to monitor and denounce

environmental damages all over the country, which highly contributed to making state actors aware of the need to inaugurate systematic policy action in this field.

Observers and students of the environmental policy sector in Portugal agreed on the three crucial moments of this evolution: (1) the right to a clean and balanced environment as a fundamental citizen right in the first democratic Constitution of 1976; (2) the approval by the parliament of a basic law for the environment in 1987, which was the first structuring legal framework aiming at giving consistency to policy-making in this sector; (3) and the bottom line (beginning of the 1990s) previously negotiated with the European Commission to complete the inclusion of EC environmental directives into the internal rule.<sup>7</sup>

Concerns with nature conservation and environmental protection had been practically non-existent in the late authoritarian regime ideological framework. However, the industrial boom of the 1950s and 1960s, which was borne upon big size industries, privileging celluloses, cement, steel, chemicals, and building sectors, forced society to emerge from the prevailing stigmas of traditional values. Pioneers of modern sociology of the 1960s characterized Portugal as essentially a dualist society, that is, a society with deep asymmetries between developed and underdeveloped segments unequally distributed throughout the territory. A strong emigratory wave with concomitant desertion from rural areas originated a sudden, though definitive, decline of traditional agriculture. In consequence, afforestation projects with non-original species started invading the fields of many rural areas, and unequivocally broke up local eco-systems. In southern areas the effects of erosion caused by extensive breeding of corn, which since the late 1920s was promoted and protected through state policies, accentuated the crisis of *latifundium* estates. In general, the agriculture sector gradually became the cause and recipient of different kinds of environmental damages. Technological asymmetries affected also the distribution through the territory of traditional and modernized agriculture poles. The decline of traditional peasantry was paralleled by the increasing pollution of lands and water streams, due to newly

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<sup>7</sup> See e.g. Pimenta et alli (1993), Schmidt et alli (1994) and Eloy (1996), which are also good syntheses of empirical information described in this section.

introduced intensive and industry-oriented methods of production, use of chemicals, mechanization of forestry and agriculture, and massive promotion of enclosed animal breeding.

When cellulose industry unities were installed in the 1950s, the productivity inducement aiming to articulate industrial development with upstream production of low-priced raw materials had definitely entered the technical and economic world of forestry. Favorable natural conditions for fast growing species made the eucalyptus a priority of forestry policies.

The environmental effects of this first development boom were virtually unknown before 1974, with the exception of pioneer concerns that emerged within natural sciences university departments and forestry and agriculture state administration in the early 1970s. This led to the first state initiatives in nature conservation with the creation of the first national parks.

With the exception of some punctual legislation concerning coast pollution and the quality of water for public consumption in the beginning of the 1970s, it was only after 1974 that governmental structures specifically dedicated to the environment and nature conservation had been created. The creation of a state secretary for the environment by provisory governments after April 1974 was the first step to approve environmental regulations and launch administrative structures for the sector, which then was almost exclusively dedicated to nature conservation and territory planning. The aim was to regulate urbanization and housing by means of some compulsory rules to protect and preserve landscape and ecological sites deserving particular recognition. A state agency dedicated to the administration of national parks was created. Eloquently it was then called *Serviço Nacional de Parques, Reservas e Patrimônio Paisagístico* (National Service for Natural Parks, Reserves, and Landscape Heritage), a name that later changed to *Instituto de Conservação da Natureza* (Nature Conservation Institute).

The Constitution of 1976 is commonly cited as the first document of an emerging environmental consciousness at the state level, in that it expressively linked the protection of the environment to a huge scope of citizen's fundamental rights. The democratic movement and political parties wanted to highlight the Constitution as a starting point to establish an advanced democratic regime. Articles 9 and 66 explicitly endorsed the right to have a well-balanced environment among a wide and advanced set of political and social rights of freedom and social

protection that the state had the duty to guarantee *vis-à-vis* the citizenry. These articles still established a set of state duties concerning protection, prevention, monitoring, control, and promotion of the quality of the environment, explicitly associating territory planning to environmental protection issues. In parallel, Article 52 instituted the right to petition and «popular action».

Nevertheless, the re-establishing of democracy in April 1974 did not avoid the persistent environmental deterioration of natural landscapes and ecological sites. The permissive climate installed has contributed enormously to make an awful portrait of environmental standards of a «late comer» on the eve of the EEC adhesion. Clandestine buildings at the seaside and in surroundings of big towns; the increase of building regardless of elementary rules of environmental and landscape protection; the accumulation of injurious omissions in terms of territory management; unplanned and very often illegal extraction of raw materials (e. g. the problems of extracting sand from river beds); the «wild» growth of tourist industry at the seaside; the extensive installation of highly polluting industries overcharging water streams and public services of domestic effluent draining; anarchic and random concentration of toxic and solid urban waste over the landscape, etc.

As a matter of fact, policy and legislation initiatives of the newly environmental administration could not expand beyond simple nature protection rules and management of natural parks. Resources and competence ascribed to the state secretary of the environment were very limited, but new legislation issued in early 1980s unveiled deep concerns of state administration and the government about the increase of air pollution on some urban and industrial poles. Although, effective regulation and means for monitoring air pollution was only established in the early 1990s.

Slow rule implementation was undeniably a feature of the environmental policy domain until the early 1990s. Although landscape and territory planning was the first concern of environmental state administration, it wasn't until the early 1980s that bills were launched for consistent policies in this area. Namely, agriculture and ecological reserve areas were defined all over the territory, hoping to establish basic compulsory rules of territory planning at the local

and regional level. The idea was to initiate the elaboration of plans for optimizing the use of territory resources without damaging ecological sites and the environmental dimensions of the landscape. But plans for sea-side areas were delayed, and violations of territory planning rules generously conceded by state administration to private and public developers, particularly at the local level, show why the regulation process on this matter was still far from its completion by the mid 1990s.

Political turbulence during the first years of democracy, which caused governmental instability that lasted until the mid 1980s, did not facilitate a definition of consistent policy strategies for state action in the environmental domain. The fluctuation of politicians in charge of governmental posts caused instability of the administration. Moreover, the state secretary for the environment had known several different ministry tutelages. Only in 1985 this governmental portfolio received a substantial increase in budgets and scope of competence by integrating some policy sectors which were previously dispersed by other ministries. This was also the beginning of the European integration process, which contributed to a steady waking up of the public and collective actors for the environmental threats and risks of economic development and industrial growth.

In 1987, European funds made available for initiatives linked to the European Year for the Environment Program were used for promoting a campaign to bring public attention to environmental issues. A set of initiatives were also launched to enhance an emergent association field mobilizing on environmental protection and nature conservation issues. This process culminated with the creation of a state agency called *Instituto Nacional do Ambiente - INAMB* (National Institute for the Environment). The goal was to have an autonomous environmental agency specifically serving as a strategic interface between the citizenry and the state. Supporting associations was an important task of the agency. Environmental associations received then a great stimulus and funding from the state. A bill regulating their participation, public intervention, and consultation in policy-making was approved by the parliament, which also approved the basic law for the environment presented by the government.

The goals of the basic law for the environment were to have a well-structured legal framework for environmental policy-making. The law defined: (1) the fundamental areas of state intervention and policy-making in this domain; (2) the essential tools and administrative structures of environmental policy-making; (3) the normative framework for licencing installation of new industries and infrastructure building; and (4) the assessment of impacts over the territory and the environment resulting from economic activity. Finally, the rights and duties of the citizenry concerning the environment, and principles regulating penalties for violation of environmental laws and regulations were also specified.

Approving this law was the starting point for a sudden outburst of legislation and regulation on environmental issues. Regulations concerning management and pollution of water resources, air, industry licencing, protection of ecological sites, industrial and urban waste disposals, seaside protection, urbanism and territory planning, etc. was approved next. However, all bills had been approved without considering the means and resources needed to implement and effectively enforce them. In consequence, all legislative efforts anchored in omission and unefficiency of state action, which highly contributed to progressively worsen the environmental performances of the economic recovering of the 1980s.

In order to give technical and scientific sustainability to this legislative endeavor and subsequent policy making, efforts were also made in the second half of the 1980s to gather data and elaborate reports about environmental consequences and damages resulting from development, modernization, and growth of the economy. In spite of insufficiency and superficiality of data previously accumulated, technical and scientific commissions were eager to report a drastic worsening of environmental performances in many sectors. The extent of problems such as the disposal of toxic and dangerous wastes, and the draining off of effluents by half of the industries installed could finally be evaluated.

The White Book for the Environment remains the most relevant of these reports. Further emphasizing the urgency of some policy «therapies», it focused mainly on the environmental *status quo* for the period of 1987-90. Due to its comprehensive, systematic approach and insightful diagnosis of the most important environmental problems of the nation, it had

widespread impact. The state administration used this support to exert pressure upon other policy sectors and governmental structures, economic actors, and the public to start giving environmental policies priority.

All local observers and students of environmental problems agree that, in spite of legislation efforts and policy initiatives carried out in the 1980s, the environmental policy sector lacked, in practice, efficient regulation, implementation, monitoring, and effective enforcing of legislation. Through the 1990s onwards, administrative structures and services that had to control and implement environmental policy initiatives were very inefficient, giving this policy sector an image of disregard and neglect.

But lack of resources and means of action also affected the functioning of the judicial system, from which efficiency the effective enforcement of law ultimately depends on. A climate of indulgency slowed down the internalization pace of respect for environmental laws by the citizenry and economic actors. This explains why demands to national courts never significantly entered the action repertoire of environmental groups in Portugal, although there has always been some legal means standing for it. On the contrary, they never dismissed any opportunity for applying either to the EU Commission in Brussels or directly to the European Court, although suspicions over the independence of Portuguese courts were not the case.<sup>8</sup>

In any case, in the early 1990s the legislative process of formal adaptation and integration of EU environmental directives and regulations was practically complete, although the deficit of implementation and enforcement eliminated any practical effects of regulatory efforts. On the contrary, deterioration of environmental performances of the economy and the nation as a whole, in consequence of the economic boom of the last years showed how urgent effective policy making in this sector was.

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<sup>8</sup> For information about the autonomy and independence of the judicial system as regards to political forces and state structures in the transition to democracy period, see Magalhães (1995). For more knowledge of the imagery of inefficiency and slowness ascribed to the functioning of the judicial system in Portugal, see Santos *et al.* (1996). In order to focus on the emergence of environmental law as a new field of adjudication in Portuguese courts see Pureza *et al.* (1996).

The first programs of technological modernization were carried out after negotiations with most important corporate interests and economic actors. Funded in part by the state and European funds, technological adaptations attempted to make environmental performances of several industrial sectors to comply with EU patterns and standards, and to abide by newly approved national legislation.

In the meantime, the elaboration and approval of local territory plans finally allowed local administrations to have rules for development at the local level. The civil law code revision of 1993 included explicit norms defining some damaging actions against nature and the environment as crimes.<sup>9</sup> But the most important event of environmental politics by the early 1990s was undoubtedly the creation of a ministry for environment and natural resources. The competence of the environmental policy sector was then enlarged, although it still took two more years before the new structure of the environmental administration was installed. The competence of the new ministry expanded into important domains of territory planning, seaside, and surroundings of protected areas, but its scope of intervention remained strictly confined to the environmental sphere *strictus sensus*. Therefore, the influence of the environmental policy sector on decision-making of other policy sectors remained very limited. A lot of examples show how economic development continued regardless of specific criteria and concerns about the environmental effects of developing initiatives. The most cited example is the case of environmental impact assessment rules for big infrastructures.

Initially, the environmental administration had practically no means for interfering with other policy sectors' decision-making by invoking environmental considerations. Its role in the process was merely consultive. Although the cross-cutting character of environmental policies was an important point of governmental actors' discourse, a sharp split persisted between the environmental policy sector and other policy sectors, such as territory planning, industrial promotion, and infrastructure building. For instance, the road-building plan, though mostly financed by European funds, was carried out at the expense of the most basic environmental and

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<sup>9</sup> Before 1993 only seven cases of environmental and nature damages were presented to civil courts (Ferreira do Amaral 1994).



nature protection criteria. In practice, it was the real structuring tool of territory planning. Environmental impact assessment reports, which were supposed to support decision-making and minimize impacts on natural sites and the environment, became compulsory by law only after 1990. The reports were often elaborated *a posteriori* to formally meet with EU requirements. Threats of fund freezing often forced state actors rush EIA studies for highways already half done.

This example also shows how structural funds made available by the EC had largely contributed to some environmental problems. Certainly, the adhesion to the EC had introduced new opportunities to implement more demanding and rigorous patterns of environmental performance. This is true not only in environmental laws and regulations, but also in improving democratic performances of policy and decision-making processes. However, this did not mean automatic changes in old habits in policy and decision-making methods deeply rooted in autocratic and statist traditions established within the state administration. Although an important part of these funds had been specifically applied to promote environmental protection and nature defence, the global result ended up being a portrait of environmental disregard. This contrasted with the successful use of funds for development and modernization of infrastructures.

Some basic indicators of environmental performance support this view. For instance, the judgement made by Marques (1994) about the first eight years of European integration and several EU programs in support of policy measures that aimed at improving levels of sustainability for economic development is very deceptive. OECD data for the years of 1991-92 show that GNP growth, by comparison with the medium standards of EU and OECD nations, had been obtained at the expense of wasting more energy, both in production and in transport; of much more pressure upon natural resources; and of higher levels of solid, urban, and industrial waste production (op. cit.: 131-42).

Due to lower levels of development and wide territory asymmetries, areas of high environmental quality continued to exist. However, technological obsolescence of many traditional industry sectors, and low levels of infrastructuration in what concerns treatment of

urban and industrial effluents and waste disposals made values of energy consumption, waste production, and pollution *per capita* or by GNP unity very high.<sup>10</sup> Thus, one of the most important aspects of environmental conditions in Portugal in the early 1990s was the fact that, although global values of pollution burdens still remained relatively low in absolute terms, specific values by inhabitant and GNP were among the highest of the European Union (Nunes Correia 1995: 141).

In conclusion, given the fundamental role of the state in promoting development and modernization of the economy, state action resulted in a double onus for the environment. As a developer and promoter of economic development, the state dismissed of its regulatory functions in the environmental field too often. Due to its environmental performance as developer and omissions in its regulatory role in the environmental policy field, the state failed to furthering legitimacy for demanding the citizenry and economic actors to behave in accordance with environmental and nature protection rules. In this case, private economy actors did not have valid reasons to burden economic investment with costs of environmental protection. Therefore, public goods and services were charged with inherent externalities.

On a strictly formal level, that is, on legislative and institutional dimensions, recent conditions have been established in Portugal for launching a strategy aimed at pursuing more consistent and efficient environmental policies in order to reach minimum patterns and medium standards of environmental performance prevalent in the EU. However, state action has remained a prisoner of its essential role as promoter of development and modernization, and regulator of social and economic interests. State action in the environmental policy sector has been essentially determined by contradictions inherent to this twofold role. Finally, even the enhancing of means of action by civil society in favour of environmental protection and nature conservation ended up depending also on a great deal of state initiative.

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<sup>10</sup> The White Book on the Environment (MARN 1991) recognizes that the value of discharges of domestic effluents into water streams in Portugal were in the early 1990s ten times superior to minimum levels established by internal and European Union norms. In the case of industrial effluents the value was 13 times superior (Nunes Correia 1995: 141).

## **PART II**

### **The Rise of Environmentalism in Portugal: The Politics of Environmental Protest and Issues on the Eve of the EEC Adhesion**

Part II gives an empirical and analytical account of the first wave of environmentalism in Portugal. Although inspired by similar waves of environmental collective action that by the late 1960s and 1970s began taking the form of a social movement in more advanced nations, the rise of environmentalism in Portugal followed its own path and patterns. The political opportunity structure has the mark of contextual political circumstances associated with the post-coup transition to democracy period and the stabilization of the democratic regime on the eve of the EEC adhesion. Decolonization, democracy, and state reform occupied the centre stage of political agendas, while reacting to welfare demands and recovering from the economic crisis emerged as the most important issues that successive governments were forced to address.

The nuclear issue and the first governmental initiatives launching an environmental policy field -- which was essentially a small state department dedicated to environmental education and propaganda -- were at the origins of political opportunities presented to the emerging environmental movement organizations. Because of their case-significance and impact on environmental politics in Portugal in the period, these issues may be considered pivotal events in which a new political territory focusing on the relationship between society and nature was being forged. The main focus of this part is, thus, the empirical configuration and shape of the aforementioned political opportunities, and the rise of environmentalism as an organizational form of collective action.

## **Chapter 3. - Environmental Politics and Issues on the Eve of the EEC Adhesion**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter 3 focuses on the rise of environmental politics and issues in Portugal on the eve of the EEC adhesion. This period is characterized by state actors' efforts to reconstruct the hegemony of the state at several levels of political and socio-economic action. The contradictions of political processes described hereafter have, indeed, the mark of the post-coup political context. The stabilization of a new state order, following the model of representative democracy, was then a priority of state action led by successive and unstable cabinets formed through political party arrangements resulting from either presidential or parliamentary elections. Grass roots mobilization processes on political and socioeconomic issues -- mostly pushed by the Communist Party and leftist, non-parliamentary groups -- and halting military interference in politics were then a high priority of conventional democratic parties.

However, state action was further undermined by governmental instability and difficulties in government formation. Also at stake was the definition of a new political model able to mobilize the entire nation and renew national identity after the loss of the African colonial empire. While most conventional parties found a way out of the national identity crisis by allying with, and following political and economic models of, central European nations, the conditions that allowed the country to return to democratic rule made the military sector an important protagonist of political processes. Obviously, this was contradictory with the conventional parties' view of representative democracy. The functioning of the political system lacked, thus, a clear definition of the democratic rule that might lead to state action and political power.

Moreover, there was the economic and financial crisis. The economic situation of the country was aggravated by the dismantling of the productive system, due to strong worker movement upheavals and political power struggles that forced the nationalization of big industries, banks, and other financial, private corporations. Apart from having to directly

intervene in most economic sectors to guarantee employment, social order, or simply their functioning, the state became, therefore, a big and decisive actor in most important economic spheres, which included banks and key sectors of the productive system. This had further political consequences. It enhanced the weight of state bureaucracy and paternalism towards civil society.

From within the sphere of state action, the rise of environmentalism may be better perceived through events surrounding the nuclear power issue and the first efforts to lay the foundations of a specific policy sector fully dedicated to environmental protection. The nuclear power debate and decision-making process lasted for about seven years, and cleavages over the issue split state actors and political parties alike.

The second political issue was a different problem. The empirical analysis focuses on the attempts of the 'green' monarchists to further an environmental policy field within the sphere of the state. They monopolized the environmental portfolio in several governments for years, gaining therefore the reputation of being a 'green' party. However, they neglected the mobilization potential of environmental groups, which may have contributed to the 'green' monarchists' failure. In the end, monarchists also failed to self-impose as a 'green' party.

### **3.2. The nuclear energy issue and the emerging of an anti-nuclear expertise opposition**

It was still under the political context of the post-coup period that the first anti-nuclear power demonstrations took place in 1977. The government planned to install a nuclear-power plant in *Ferrel*, a small village by the seaside about one hundred kilometres north from Lisbon. The locals and many young «green» activists mobilized by the two most important environmental organizations of that time culminated in a big Ecological Festival at the place where the plant was to be built (Pimenta et al. 1993: 148-9; Rosa 1990: 61; and Lemos 1988: 48). For the first time in Portugal, public attention was given to mobilization initiatives of environmental groups. The Portuguese youth was entering the anti-nuclearist «mood», adopting the same widespread symbols -- e.g. the yellow sunflower -- and adapting anti-nuclear protest slogans that had gained recognition worldwide.

The nuclear option for power production in Portugal was already envisaged by governmental authorities of the prior political regime. By the mid 1960s, the electricity company established the first international contacts, and technical services of the administration started developing scientific and technical knowledge about nuclear power production (Teixeira 1979). However, the issue only appeared in the electric company's annual reports in 1974. It came to the foreground in 1975 when the company presented the fourth provisional government<sup>1</sup> a report on power production development. Nuclear power production was referred to as an inevitable alternative for the future. The proposal was borne upon some preparatory studies elaborated by foreign companies of the nuclear sector, and on estimations about energy needs for industrial and urban development expectations. Due to the insufficiency of power production by hydro and thermo-electric stations installed, it was announced that the first of two plants should start operating in 1982. The project was supposed that uranium mined in Portugal could be used after technical treatment that had to be made abroad.

The project had supporters positioned in high-level administration and technical services of the recently nationalized electric company and the energy policy sector. More importantly, the project also had important supporters, though also opponents, inside both the Socialist and Popular Democratic Parties, which had been the most voted in the first free elections.

Difficulties to recover from a profound economic crisis made the economic and technological dependency to emerge as the first frame of public debates on nuclear power. However, technological and economic dependency factors were mostly seized in abstract, ideological terms. The increase of the external debt implied by the project was rarely viewed as an ultimate obstacle. On the contrary, the project was justified by the need to overcome the nation's oil dependency after the 1970's international energy crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> Portugal had the first free elections in 1975. After the parliament had elaborated and approved a new Constitution, there were new parliamentary elections and the First Constitutional Government was formed in 1976. Before this, six provisional governments had been formed, often lead by military officers. These cabinets were then directly empowered by the President of the Republic and the Council of the Revolution. This council was a transitional political body previewed by the Constitution and formed by the military officers that made the *coup d'état* in April 1974.

A governmental crisis in the summer of 1975 blocked a governmental decision over the nuclear for the first time. The proposal only returned to the government in March, 1976. The state secretary for the environment was then held by the Monarchic Party leader, who in spite of his conservative political beliefs, was particularly known for his «environmentalist» penchant. However, his role in the government as being responsible for the environmental policy sector was more emblematic than effective. In any case, promises for a public debate on the issue had been made by the government once preparatory studies were finished.

However, the nuclear power production proposal found decisive opposition within the expertise sector of technical universities, which started demanding more information about the project. They consistently contested economic and technical assumptions of the electric company. Particularly, they denounced the lack of planning over energy production that could justify such an ambitious proposal, and classified the way in which the proponents elaborated the proposal as negligent. For instance, they contested the possibility of using home mined uranium due to both economic and technological reasons, and criticized the absence of any environmental considerations. In addition, they also highlighted the lack of technological and scientific background by local scientists and engineers to deal with complexity of technological and economic features of the nuclear. Many experts mistrusted, thus, the scientific and economic foundations of preparatory studies supporting the project, demanding for more systematic studies.

The expertise opposition was led by a group of physicians and engineers from the Technical University of Lisbon. Some of them had recently come from a period of advanced formation in foreign universities, which increased their scientific prestige. They organized the *Comissão Promotora do Debate Nacional Sobre a Opção Nuclear* (Commission for the Promotion of the Public Debate on the Nuclear Option), which almost two hundred experts, scientists, and intellectuals of several fields suddenly joined. Resorting to scientific data, they believed that the proposal had no technical neither economic well-founded justifications, and organized in order to tell it in the media and every public arenas available.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For the core of the anti-nuclearist expertise arguments see Domingos (1978a; 1978b).

The opposition of the nuclear by relevant sectors of the expertise completely reversed the career of the issue. Surprisingly, it was not restricted to a couple of far left groups in decay, some disperse ecologists, and the Communist Party. The proponents did not seem to be prepared for a public debate over the technical and scientific foundations of the project, as they expected to develop the necessary technological studies only after a governmental decision was made. The anti-nuclear opposition of the expertise was, thus, convinced of the eventual absence of a sustainable long-term plan for power production and provision, as well as consistent technical and scientific studies in consideration of all risks, technical capacities, and potential alternatives. Whether such preparatory studies and plans existed, their consistency had to be judged in public by those prepared to. It seems they were right in mistrusting the accuracy of preparatory studies. It was later discovered that *Ferrel* was located in a seismic area.

Certainly, not all independent expertise had such an anti-nuclearist stand. Some physicians were more cautious in their opinion. Particularly, they argued that a benefit-cost analysis to different alternatives of energy production was not at all unfavourable to the nuclear. Actually, hydroelectricity production had reached a peak of potentialities in the country, and technology for effectively using other natural sources such as sunlight, winds, tides, geothermal, and nuclear fusion was still in its infancy. Given the high price of oil and the lack of natural gas sources available, only the high costing coal alternative was left. A suitable comparison between coal and nuclear fission in terms of costs, risks, pollution, residues storage, and economic and technological dependency was not all that unfavourable, some experts argued. However, a question not totally clear in public debates was whether the energy needs of the country would justify the amount of investment necessary for the nuclear project?

Thus, a paradoxical situation was evolving during public debates about the issue. Those accepting the nuclear option, provided it was economically justified and that all technical, environmental, and security conditions were guaranteed, blamed the superficiality, misinformation, and passionate stand of the anti-nuclearism prevailing in debates. Although, technical and scientific articles and reports abounded in newspapers, reviews, and other media. The anti-nuclearist expertise, on the contrary, blamed the misinformation and the hidden technical and economic data underlying the nuclear project. They particularly denounced the



proponents' refusal to talk about risks and unsolved problems connected with nuclear technology -- for instance, waste disposal problems. The fact was that proponents resisted to discuss in public all technical, economic, and scientific data which supposedly they used to formulate the project. This made the anti-nuclearist expertise suspicious about the consistency of the preparatory studies that supported the nuclear option.

As a result, the government asked for more sustainable studies before making a final decision. However, daily power cuts had to be organized starting in June 1976, making the population even more aware of the urgent energy problem. Since the country was dependent on hydro-electric power, successive years of dryness added to the economic and energy crisis of the early to mid 1970s to justify a program of energy saving measures.<sup>3</sup>

Energy policy considerations mingled, thus, with complex scientific issues in public debates, dividing experts and forcing them to address the media and other public arenas. This made politicians and the government hesitate and fall into a deadlock situation. Seemingly, the debate had been launched before the authorities and proponents were prepared to handle it. Several sectors of public-opinion asked for a prudent decision, and the idea of a nuclear moratorium started gaining support among the public, experts, and most political actors.

The issue also presented the first opportunity for the emerging ecological groups to gain public recognition. The *Movimento Ecológico Português* was already mobilizing the issue by organizing public debates in towns and villages near the place where the first nuclear plant was supposed to be installed, enhancing the emerging of grass roots upheavals similar to those mobilized by the «leftist» movement during the revolutionary period. Actually, in March 1976, locals blocked preparatory works carried out by the electric company in *Ferrel*, rebelling against the silence they got from authorities about the issue.

Of course, the terms of the public debate on the issue were not original. Ecologists stressed high consequential risks of radioactivity, heat pollution, security, vulnerability to accidents and terrorist attacks, nuclear waste disposal problems, dismissal of non-polluting

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<sup>3</sup> Although not as drastic as daily power cuts, other initiatives for imposing energy saving by the population continued from the mid 1970s onwards.

energy sources, and the lack of democratic control inherent to highly complex and centralized power production systems. Nuclear plant supporters blamed anti-nuclearists of misinformation on technical and scientific features of the project, stressing the need to stop oil dependence by diversifying power production sources. They also argued about the possibility of exploring local mining resources instead of imported ones, and emphasized the opportunity for local industries to enter a new technological stage by joining technological and economic trends of more advanced nations. Several local firms were supposed to participate in the construction of the project, which also allowed employment opportunities.

Although seemingly leaning towards a pro-nuclear position, the sixth provisional government opted for a postponement of decision-making in March 1976, asking the electric company for more complete reports to enable the government to reach to a definitive decision in the next months. This made the contestation about the issue to calm down for a while, allowing the first constitutional elections to ignore the issue and focus mainly on political party programs, and on development and welfare issues.

The First Constitutional Government was established in the summer of 1976 and formed by the Socialist Party leader after winning parliamentary elections. The government had many representatives of the pro-nuclear «lobby», particularly in the energy and industry portfolios. The program of the government explicitly included the installation of a nuclear power plant, but the issue was almost forgotten in parliamentary debates. Apart from the communists, all other opposition parties had nuclear supporters and opponents within their ranks. In any case, the new prime minister promised to command a *Livro Branco* (White Paper) about the issue, which was expected to be handed to the ministers council in the fall of 1977. This time, however, the commission in charge of elaborating the study included a wider range of experts and consultants from universities, industries, and state agencies for nuclear and environmental issues. The aim was to have a well-structured, prospective analysis on costs and benefits, both in economic and energy terms, concerning not only the nuclear power but also other energy alternatives, as well as a medium-term estimation of economic growth and electric power needs to justify the scope of choices.

This was precisely what the expertise opposition was requesting. Before the White Paper was made public, the press managed to diffuse something about it. It supposedly included estimations on the evolution of the coal market, and an economic analysis of different fuel alternatives (oil, coal, and uranium). An analysis about the Portuguese industry's ability to participate in the nuclear plant project -- namely for the cases of metallurgy, mechanics, and building industries -- was also included.

However, the Three Mile Island accident of 1979 gave anti-nuclear protesters an opportunity to convey new arguments. Experts and other analysts agreed that a tragedy with bigger consequences was avoided due to coincidence of highly experienced expertise and chance. Since Portugal lacked an experienced expertise, anti-nuclearists argued that the risk of a tragedy caused by a similar accident was enormous. This made technological independence something more than simply an economic consideration.

Actually, the international «mood» about nuclear power projects began then to turn unfavourable. The anti-nuclear movement had reached the mobilization peak in the USA and many European countries. After some accidents in nuclear-power stations considered the most secure, media's attention on the issue was high all over the world (Rüdig 1990; Joppke 1991 and 1993). Moreover, the increasing costs of installation, fuel, and new security rules added to widespread public mobilization due to alarm hinted by accidents in nuclear plants all over the world. This began to force governments to reduce nuclear station installation plans and opt for coal. The government of the USA drastically reduced the number of nuclear stations planned until the end of the century, and the World Bank began to be more restrictive about financial support to new nuclear energy projects. Meanwhile, an ecologist list received 10 per cent of the votes in French elections, after street demonstrations and public mobilization against the French nuclear power program.

The first version of the White Paper was finally ready in the summer of 1979, but it was still unpublished one year after, which made anti-nuclearists suspicious of delays. As a matter of fact, since it was commanded in 1977 by the socialist Premier of the first and second constitutional governments, the release of the White Paper had been announced and postponed several times. Yet, the next three constitutional governments formed by so-called independents

through the initiative of the president of the republic, lacked enough political support from parliamentary parties to go ahead with the issue.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, when a new right-wing majority emerged in the elections of 1979, finally promising a new basis for governmental stability unknown so far in post-1974 politics, it seemed that political conditions were made to decide about important development issues, the nuclear power in first place.

However, the major parties in the governmental coalition were split about the nuclear program, and the small 'green'-Monarchic Party had joined the coalition, thereby re-appearing in the political scene as a minor governmental partner. The exquisite party fusion of «environmentalism» and conservative politics made it very appealing to right-wing political arrangements. But it accentuated cleavages within the governmental coalition about the nuclear power production program. The leader of the Monarchic Party clearly stood against the installation of nuclear power stations in Portugal, and the monarchists' first initiative in the newly formed parliament was to propose a bill forbidding nuclear waste disposals inside the country.

Meanwhile, a new issue entered the political and public debates on the nuclear program. The Spanish nuclear power stations' program was well-known by Portuguese authorities. In 1978, Spain had several nuclear power stations installed and seven more planned during the next few years. The plan included the installation of three nuclear power stations very close to the Portuguese border. This was, particularly, the case of *Sayago*, just twelve kilometers from the border on the banks of the *Douro* river, one of the most important rivers crossing the country.

Negotiations and regular meetings between officials and representatives of the two governments started taking place. As a result, guarantees over nuclear security, quality of river water, and environmental protection would finally be approved. However, the Spanish nuclear

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<sup>4</sup> The so called «presidential governments» had no direct parliamentary support. They were nominated by the president of the republic when there was either no parliamentary majority resulting from elections, or a coalition able to form a cabinet. Proportionality of the electoral system made it difficult for parliamentary majorities to emerge. The presidential alternative to form a cabinet was founded upon the ambiguous semi-presidentialist constitutional bias of the political system. The instability of these governments were apparent, and they were forced to avoid decision-making on polemical issues.

power production project gave the nuclearists in Portugal a newly, seemingly decisive argument. Since Portugal would have to bear virtual consequences of nuclear power plants nearby, that is, close to the border, in any circumstances, why not to have the benefits? Yet, given obstacles raised in Portugal for launching a nuclear power program, the argument eventually justified the participation in the Spanish nuclear power program.<sup>5</sup>

However, the concerns of North-Eastern populations over the Spanish nuclear power stations near the border were gradually evolving into protest actions. The Spanish nuclear power station near the *Douro* river even originated protests by Oporto wine producers and traders, since vines grow on the banks of the river. Strong protest movement had also emerged on the other side of the border, where environmental groups and local political leaders were mobilizing the population and local administrations, and forming a strong anti-nuclearist grass roots movement.

The Portuguese government's views about the nuclear issue was now very awkward. Actually, the government had to contest the location of Spanish nuclear power plants near the border. However, this meant the recognition of potential risks involved, which could no longer be neglected in the case of a Portuguese nuclear program.

The Spanish nuclear power program for the border regions caused a deflection of public attention from Portuguese nuclear power production program. The opposition was now questioning the government about security guarantees and environmental protection of the northeastern region obtained from Spanish authorities, not about the successive postponing of the White Paper on the Portuguese nuclear power production program. In the meantime, ecological groups also started orienting propaganda and protest mobilization to address the Spanish plans for building a nuclear station near the border. In March 1981, some northern groups called for an anti-nuclear demonstration to be held in the summer in *Miranda do Douro* - a northeastern small town on the *Douro* river banks some 15 kilometers from the Sayago nuclear plant site. It seemed there was a pause in the public debate on the Portuguese nuclear power production program. All debaters and anti-nuclear mobilizers were waiting for the

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<sup>5</sup> The state secretary of energy was said to have suggested the idea of installing a Portuguese reactor in one of the Spanish nuclear plants near the border, provided it would be acceptable for the Spanish authorities.

initiative on the issue by the newly formed majority government, when concerns over the Spanish nuclear power program had interfered.

### **3.3. The National Energy Provision Plan and the growing of anti-nuclearism in public opinion**

By the early 1980s, the pressures from the energy company for a governmental decision-making on the nuclear power production program intensified. Daily power cuts had re-started in November 1980, when a cold snap swept all Europe hindering energy imports from Spain and France. This added to difficulties in hydro-electricity production after a period of dryness in the Iberian Peninsula. Television campaigns for energy saving had to be launched again. However, when the electric company released a report on energy saving achievements in March 1981, conclusions were not very enthusiastic. While the annual increase rate in energy consumption was around 7.5 per cent, energy saving by households stayed below 5 per cent. Furthermore, only 25 per cent of energy consumption was ascribed to households and it was not possible to extend power cuts into industries, at the risk of aggravating the economic crises and unemployment. Actually, the electricity consumption *per capita* was then one of the lowest in Europe, and there was no way to cut back what was already very low.

The new minister of the industry and energy promised a policy program on energy production to be released by the end of the year. The initiative was announced as more ambitious than simply a remake of the White Paper on nuclear energy production. Seemingly, the White Paper strategy for the nuclear option was definitely abandoned.

Initially, the new minister's policy orientations surprised both supporters and opponents of the nuclear power program. The minister had the wise opinion that the nuclear option should not be viewed as «the solution», nor an urgent question. The lack of technical, scientific, and financial resources in order to achieve technological autonomy, he argued, would hinder Portugal's ability to invest strongly in this area. In order to decrease energy dependence in the future, he proposed, the alternative was to start investing in new technologies according to the natural resources available inside the country. His policy orientations insisted, thereby, on a

strategy of diversifying energy sources, which could in many cases replace oil. Apart from hydro-electric production, agricultural and forestry raw materials to produce coal, biogas, and other liquid fuels were solutions envisaged by policy orientations expounded by the minister. The new plan of energy provision for the next 30 years would, thus, supposedly encourage private producers to turn to alternative forms of energy resorting upon natural resources such as sunlight, forestry, organic waste, and so on. A new commission headed by the state secretary of energy was then nominated by the ministers council in charge of elaborating the so-called *Plano Energético Nacional* (National Energy Provision Plan). The plan consisted of applying projections of energy consumption to different economic development scenarios, in order to evaluate investment costs and yield main energy source alternatives, that is, oil, coal, and the nuclear fission.

In spite of being a member of a right wing cabinet, the minister received sympathy from the ecologist milieu due to his sensibility towards soft energy sources and prudence about the nuclear program. His policy orientations had the effect of shifting the focus of the public debate on energy policy issues. The nuclear option started to be regarded more cautiously by energy policy-makers, being now referred to as just a potential complement within a wider set of alternatives for diminishing dependence on oil imports. The scope of alternatives went from wide energy-saving measures to coal, clean technologies, hydroelectricity, and other natural resources internally available. The plan would have to balance them all after more realistic expectations of economic development. In other words, although the nuclear option had not yet been abandoned, it left the centre stage of the debate on energy policy for a moment due to policy orientations of the minister of energy. Meanwhile the coal option began to be referred to as «the alternative». The minister even talked about the need to develop a Coal Provision Plan.<sup>6</sup>

In any case, since there were instant energy needs, investments had to be made in order to satisfy short term urgent demands which the long term plan could not respond to. Thereby, it was

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<sup>6</sup> A report on the Portuguese energy provision situation and policy, released by the International Energy Agency of the OECD, which included some policy recommendations that, curiously, coincided in many points with the new minister's approach, had also highly contributed to this shift in debates over the nuclear issue.

decided that the electric company should pursue a program of coal stations, which the company had interrupted a few years before. Actually, a first attempt to install a new coal station plant in the north had been blocked by a very strong local opposition movement. However, technical studies for an alternative location of new coal-fired plants proceeded elsewhere, while new campaigns on energy saving were launched.

In a way, the new emphasis of the debate on the nuclear issue, as it was proposed by the minister, closely followed the terms defined by the scientific experts that had led the anti-nuclear opposition the last few years. They argued that a well-founded long and medium-term energy plan would demonstrate that the nuclear option was unnecessary and inadequate in the Portugal's case. However, though backstage for a while, the nuclear alternative continued to be envisaged by policy-makers, and preparatory studies for selecting possible locations of a nuclear power station had continued. The governmental coalition was still split over the issue, and quarrels inside the major party in the coalition were exploited by the press. For instance, a former minister of industry and energy -- a well-known nuclear supporter and influential majority politician -- started openly criticizing the novel policy orientations of his successor in the government. Namely, he blamed the new minister for the delays of the nuclear power production program, which he thought should be «the first priority» of Portugal's energy policy at that moment.

The experts of the electric company continued collecting and re-analyzing data, hoping to convince the expert 'milieu' and decision-makers of the nuclear option's economic reasonability. A difficult task, indeed, since experts, economists, and politicians worldwide were accumulating doubts about it. The idea that the nuclear production was cheaper had no more convincing supporters, and governments all over the world were reducing the nuclear power plant installation programs. Thus, both internal and external contextual circumstances led to the coal option, instead of, if not by default, the nuclear plant program. Although never formally decided by the government, which kept waiting for the Energy Provision Plan, the coal option started gaining consensus among the experts. By the summer of 1981 it was already referred to as «the alternative» to oil in the short term.



Thus, the debate focused no more on the nuclear issue, but rather on the «energy problem», as the minister of industry and energy had defined it. This contributed to the nuclear issues's momentary absence in public and political agendas. However, by the autumn of 1982 the nuclear supporters held a conference in Lisbon about the nuclear industry. Old arguments favourable to the nuclear option in Portugal were reiterated, and the state secretary of energy advanced some preliminary conclusions about the Energy Provision Plan. The natural gas and the nuclear project seemed to be the main points of the plan, which defined the energy provision strategy for the next 30 years.

Actually, some preparatory initiatives connected with the natural gas and coal options were initiated even before the Energy Provision Plan was officially presented to the ministers' council and the public. Energy producers were particularly interested in coal after Poland had re-entered international markets making prices to fall. But the nuclear option still remained as its supporters were deeply convinced that it was an inescapable option.

By the fall of 1982 the plan was finally ready, but the political conjuncture was not favourable for a decision-making on a polemical issue. A political crisis had risen again. After the the former prime minister's death in 1979, the majority party entered in a period of internal quarrels for leadership. Collision between the majority and the president of the republic -- a military officer that won the elections against the governmental right wing coalition candidate and was strongly supported by the left parties and the Council of the Revolution<sup>7</sup> -- aggravated the instability of the cabinet. Still, there was elections for local administrations in the fall of 1982, which made the opportunity inappropriate for cleavages over the plan inside the cabinet, the coalition, and the major party.

Moreover, expectations about a strong opposition to the nuclear program in public opinion were still very high. Demands for a public debate on the nuclear issue had recently intensified. Intellectuals, energy experts, ecological groups, and an influential independent press were campaigning against a decision-making on the issue without hearing the people. The nuclear issue was now also agitated by the opposition in parliament, blaming the government of

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<sup>7</sup> About the Council of the Revolution see footnote 1.

forcing a «non-democratic» decision-making process about it. All factors converged, thus, in a negative climate for the government to decide about the Energy Provision Plan. Finally, when the parliament was dissolved by the president of the republic, who called for new parliamentary elections, the government had no more legitimacy to decide about the Energy Provision Plan.

However, the effects from a long drought, whose effects on the hydro-electric production were apparent to everyone, were calling again the people's attention to energy problems. This made the moment perfect for the minister of industry and energy to try a «last moment» strategy before leaving the government. A solemn presentation of a synthesis of the National Energy Provision Plan was organized. The document had been elaborated by a head commission led by the state secretary of energy himself. The public presentation of the plan at precisely this moment and without any previous discussion within the ministers council was then viewed as an attempt to escape the negative political impact of disagreements internal to the cabinet and the coalition. It also aimed at softening up the impact of a public debate on the plan, which the next Government would have to decide upon. In the meantime, it would also legitimate preparatory works that had already been initiated for in the execution of the plan.<sup>8</sup>

The plan defined coal, natural gas, and nuclear power as complementary options, which the minister argued were all explicitly recommended by the International Agency for Energy of the OECD. It included medium and short-term programs to decrease oil dependency based on coal and natural gas, but it recommended a program of four to six nuclear power stations to be built over the next 30 years. Preparatory studies for localization and technology should have been concluded before 1984. An urgent decision by the next government was thus needed. Contrary to the expectations raised by the minister himself, only a couple of promotion initiatives were proposed, concerning renewal energy forms and energy saving programs.

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<sup>8</sup> Certainly not by coincidence, the state secretary of energy immediately nominated six working groups of experts recruited within the administration and public enterprises. These experts were in charge of preparing dossiers over localization, technological options, participation of national industries, security regulations, waste disposals, technical staff formation, and so on, hoping that a final «yes» to the nuclear program would be given by the fall of 1983.

The polemics ensued immediately. The «leader» of the anti-nuclearist experts, who also participated in preparatory studies for the plan, immediately disapproved of the Synthesis-Report. The report was said to be arbitrarily decided by the Head Commission of the plan and did not follow the recommendations of the Commission. The Monarchic Party leader, still minister for the 'quality of life', talked about «manipulation» of data handled by the plan. However, an opposing former minister of industry and energy and member of the majority party of the coalition, simply declared that there was nothing really new in the plan, since most of the data were essentially «qualitative indicators» without «quantitative accuracy». Thus, the same conclusions could have been made in 1981 when the «psychological climate was more favourable» due to drought and energy cuts.

General elections in the spring 1983, however, neglected the issue. Apart from the Monarchic Party, which coherently maintained its opposition to the plan, only the far left non-parliamentary parties insisted upon the issue in the electoral campaign, but they did not get more votes from it. The conventional parliamentary parties promised a public debate about the nuclear option and a revision of the plan when in the government. The revision had in view some aspects of the plan which more insistently were criticized by the expertise, such as the economic scenarios and energy provision models.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, commissions nominated by the former state secretary began the preparatory studies for the execution of the plan, selecting potential locations and technology as support for a final decision by the next government. Following criteria approved by the Atomic Energy International Agency and by nuclear agencies of the United States and France, a couple of locations for nuclear plants were selected in August 1983. This also initiated protests by local

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<sup>9</sup> Actually, when the Energy Provision Plan (version 1982) was published, experts from different scientific fields found that many hypotheses were based upon non-realistic economic scenarios and variable values, and that conclusions from the former governmental officer in charge of the issue were not at all consistent with data handled by the plan. For instance, analysts showed that a final decision on the nuclear program could be postponed until 1990. This meant the accumulation of more information on economic scenarios which was impossible to obtain in 1983. Moreover, all other options seemed to be cheaper than the nuclear one, due to the low level of energy needs of the country until 2005. It was said that energy needs were over-evaluated in order to make the nuclear choice inevitable. Finally, the problem of the nuclear waste was completely ignored in the plan.

populations and ecological groups, which anticipated the public debate the Ministry was preparing.

As a result of the 1983 spring elections, the socialists and social-democrats agreed on a post-electoral coalition to form the new government. The minister of industry and energy of the new government was a very well-known supporter of the nuclear option. However, he promised that, this time, the decision-making process would be more transparent and participative. It would include a wide and «better-informed» public and parliamentary debate on the issue after the revision of the plan. Yet, the Parliament should have a decisive say on the issue by approving a revised version of the plan. Special developing incentives for the regions selected as potential locations for nuclear power plants were offered, as well as visits by local representatives to nuclear plants both in western and eastern countries. The aim was to convince them of high security levels and local benefits associated to nuclear technology. Meanwhile, a campaign in favour of the nuclear program was launched, which included TV spots emphasizing the benefits and security of nuclear power plants in most developed countries.

In face of the minister of industry and energy's nuclearist profile, as well as of other members of the «central block» government, ecologists intensified public action and protest mobilization. But the debate on the nuclear issue was now dominated by technical features of the Energy Provision Plan, which made it hardly accessible to the public. Nevertheless, things became more difficult for nuclear supporters by the fall of 1983. Doubts started rising inside the government itself. The environmental sector of the new government continued to actively oppose the nuclear option, and the prime minister himself -- the leader of the Socialist Party -- had also confessed his doubts once other developed countries were announcing reductions in their nuclear programs. Yet, the minister of economy had declared that buying six nuclear station groups was not in his plans. Finally, the working commission for the revision of the plan found that costs of the nuclear option were much higher than those of the coal option, at least in one of the alternative scenarios under analysis.

Finally, in February 1984, a petition signed by 400 influential people from opinion-making, science, culture, religion, and juridical milieus was diffused in newspapers, asking for a moratorium on the nuclear program and for an independent commission to undertake the

revision of the Energy Provision Plan. In the petitioners' opinion, governmental authorities did not guarantee that some basic rules of democracy were being followed in decision-making about this case. The petition had enormous impact on public opinion. It made clear that the issue was not simply a question of accuracy concerning economic evolution and energy provision scenarios, but also a question of political choice incompatible with a framework of «non-participative» decision-making practices. Thereby, a decisive participation of the public sphere was necessary, in order to make the debate shift from the so far technical «neutral» field to an «engaged» political one.

At the end the new version of the plan reflected the technical terms of the expert's debate. The nuclear option was not excluded, but it was cautiously said that a final decision on the issue could be postponed until the year 1990, provided a coal program was pursued. Thereby, although this version of the plan was considered by independent experts as much more accurate than the previous one, the onus of the choice was clearly left to policy-makers and the government.

When the plan was discussed by the minister's council, the new minister of the 'quality of life', who was member of the Social Democratic Party, was one of the 400 people who had endorsed the anti-nuclear petition. Resorting to data worked out by his predecessor and by the former state secretary for the environment, he refuted all arguments favourable to the nuclear program used by the ministry of energy. Moreover, he found a new, well-positioned ally in the government. The minister of economy and finances made it very clear that the current economic situation of the nation and economic policies aiming to overcome the crisis were completely incompatible with high costs of the nuclear option.

In any case, the conditions of the debate were now somewhat reversed. The nuclearists, not their opponents, had now the onus of demonstration. In particular, they had to justify 75 per cent of the total investment in energy production for the next 30 years to a maximum of 20 per cent of the total increase in energy supply. The governmental decision on the issue was, thus, postponed again. This time, however, it was a 'sine die' postponement.

Certainly there were economic reasons for the nuclear issue to be dropped. Actually, in the years 1982-85, a very stringent economic and financial policy program to prepare the country

for the EEC adhesion had been launched. Since the nuclear power option had never achieved a consensus among the political elite, mainly among parties supporting the «central block» government, it seemed to have been definitely put aside in 1984. Whether by convincing policy orientations, due to expanded anti-nuclearism of public opinion, or seemingly by default, Portugal did not follow the nuclear solution for energy provision.

### **3.4. The 'green' monarchists and the environmental sector portfolio in the government of the republic**

The governmental panorama of the late 1970s and early 1980s in Portugal was characterized by permanent instability and cabinet changing. After April 1974 there had been six provisional governments in two years, and five constitutional governments in the following four. A state secretary of the environment had been created by the first provisional government formed after the military *coup d'état*. However, apart from problems of regime formation, political and policy priorities were mainly centered on solving the economic crisis, reorganizing industrial and agriculture sectors, and to face up to the lack of resources in order to respond to welfare demands of the people. Affected by occupations and strikes carried out by a strong mobilized worker movement, industry and agriculture were more a field of political battles than production, while revolutionary demands for political participation swept streets, factories, and urban and rural settings all over the country.

The political context, thus, made it hard for the small environmental policy sector to find a place of its own within state policy administration and governmental structures. The state secretary for the environment changed ministry tutelage every time a new government was formed, while important sectors of the administration dealing with environmental issues, such as forestry, water resources, industry installation permits, natural parks, territory planning, air and water pollution, etc., remained dispersed among several ministries for many years. Indeed, a critical issue about the environmental sector in every cabinet formation was inevitably where to locate the state secretary of the environment within the new governmental structure, and what scope of competence to assign to the environmental sector.

With the first constitutional government, formed by the Socialist Party after winning parliamentary elections in 1976, the state secretary of the environment was put under direct responsibility of the prime minister's office. This initiative was initially viewed as a promotion of the environmental sector within the government. However, the question was still «what to do with it». In practice, it was repeatedly ignored among successive government policy priorities. Although the Constitution paralleled the right to a clean environment with other welfare and citizen rights, it seemed as if the environmental sector was an awkward policy domain in the hands of governmental leaders.

Therefore, it was hard for ministers or state secretaries of the 'quality of life' and environment to go beyond a small set of scattered policy initiatives. They rarely had enough time in the post or enough political and budget resources to carry out a consistent package of environmental policy initiatives. Frequent cabinet changes burdened particularly those policy sectors that needed to be launched from the outset. Thus, the environmental policy agenda simply reacted to contingency of concrete urgent problems and direct public demands. As a result, the alternative left for the small environmental sector of state administration and respective governmental portfolio was not much more than propaganda, as an attempt to make the public more sensitive to environmental protection and nature conservation.

Nevertheless, in the late 1970s, a wide range of environmental bills were prepared, aiming to have essential legal tools allowing local authorities to legal action in order to block abuses by industries, agriculture activities, and clandestine housing. However, frequent delays and cabinet changes added to the lack of profound and systematic research on many environmental fields to make environmental policy initiatives largely ineffective in practice. Environmental laws usually lasted too many years to be prepared and approved. Disperse regulations lacking well-defined policy orientations were hard to sustain, and many environmental laws simply could not be enforced, since further bureaucratic regulations had to be agreed by, or negotiated with, a lot of other state administration sectors. The main goal of the state secretary of the environment was then defined as to «organize a wide system of information over the impact of human activities upon ecological systems, natural resources, and the environment all over the territory» (Guerreiro 1977: 19-20, and 53).

Indeed, legal competence on most environmental domains was dispersed through several state administration sectors of different ministries. When governmental working groups had to be nominated for elaborating new legislation, their formation had to be previously negotiated among diverse sectors of several ministries.

In any case, it cannot be said that the environmental portfolio had known more instability in leadership than other policy sectors during that period. On the contrary, the post of state secretary of the environment had been occupied by the same person several times. The leader of the small conservative Monarchic Popular Party, whose political orientations mixed monarchy's restoration values with rural landscape and environmental conservationism, was a very well-known pioneer of environmentalism in Portugal. In some ways, he monopolized the «ownership» of environmental issues on the political stage for years. Between May 1974 and July 1976, he had been in charge of this state secretary in all provisional governments but the fifth.<sup>10</sup> In the next five constitutional governments, either formed by the Socialist Party or through the direct initiative of the president of the republic when a majority did not emerge in parliament, changes in the environmental portfolio paralleled governmental instability.

The monarchists returned to the foreground of environmental politics when the party was invited to join a right wing coalition for the elections in the fall of 1979, allowing them to take charge of the portfolio of the environment for the next three constitutional governments. Although, the leader of the party only entered the last of these governments in 1981, it can be said that the monarchists had been in charge of this portfolio for 5 years, and in 8 of the 14 governments formed between 1974 and 1983.

The leader of the Popular Monarchic Party was a professor and expert on landscape planning. He first created the state secretary of the environment as a member of the first provisional government in 1974. By occupying the post in the next provisional governments, he strongly contributed to the creation of an environmental administrative and policy-making sector within the state. However, when he entered the ministry for the 'quality of life' in 1981 as a member of the government formed by the right wing coalition in which his party participated, he

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<sup>10</sup> Which was led by a procommunist military officer and governed for not more than one month.



still lacked political support from within the environmental movement organization sector. His support of the monarchy and of conservative politics -- e.g. his emphasis on the survival of traditional features of rural life and landscape -- hindered his influence among environmentalists (Pimenta et al. 1993: 137).

The returning of the monarchists to the environmental policy sector by the fall of 1979, and the stability expected from a majoritarian government issued from parliamentary elections, initially raised expectations about a new opportunity to mobilize resources and political will in view of launching a truly environmental policy sector. Although, it was not the leader of the party who was in charge of the portfolio. The coalition had decided that the only party leader to integrate the government was the leader of the largest party. The new premier first put the state secretary of the environment under his direct tutelage, promising to give the portfolio autonomy and a status equivalent to a ministry. Furthermore, restructuring several administrative and policy-making services with competence over environmental and territory planning issues was expected, which would enlarge the scope of action of the state secretary for the environment. However, the prime minister practically retracted from such ambitious promises and, for this reason, the state secretary resigned some time later. Another member of the Monarchic Party was appointed to the post, while the premier insisted on his commitment to give environmental policy initiatives a priority status within governmental action.

However, after the prime minister died in an airplane accident, a new government was formed in the beginning of 1981, and the monarchist leader took the opportunity to strengthen his position inside the coalition. First, he proposed to head a governmental commission in charge of restructuring the policy sector of territory planning and environment in view of creating a new ministry. Later on, after a cabinet reshuffling, he received a ministry post which concentrated on territory planning, nature conservation, and quality of life issues.

The political pragmatism of the monarchists entering «the government of the republic» formed by a right wing coalition was contradictory in several respects. First they had to dismiss the party political identity from one of its most important foundation values: the struggle for the restoration of the monarchy. In a certain way, this was replaced by the defence of a societal project in which economic development was conditioned by environmental, territory planning,

and ruralist and regionalist considerations. On the other side, the party strategic orientations had to compromise with liberal views of the economy and of the state, which were dominant within the coalition and the government.

Due to the environmental pioneerism of its leader, the Popular Monarchic Party had gained an aureole of 'green' party in the political scene. The party leadership even held radical views about some environmental issues that afterwards hardly conciliated with decision-making at the state level. For the most part, its discursive attempts to make an environmental critique of many developing policy initiatives had no further political impact. The environmental discourse of the monarchists remained marginal to political agendas and public debates as much as the Monarchic Party within the political scene.

However, the monarchists had undoubtedly pioneered the way to environmentally-oriented reasoning within many development policy debates. Yet, they also had the opportunity to directly influence decision-making at the governmental level, and to win some battles on environmental and territory planning issues. This gave the party the illusion of being an autonomous political force that could grow encroached to power on the basis of an environmental program and independently of other groups mobilizing on environmental issues within civil society. When the leader of the party entered the ministry for the 'quality of life', his optimistic view over the «growing ecological awareness of the population» -- the Monarchic Party was then enormously increasing its constituency after joining the right wing coalition that won the elections -- and his expectations on the positive impact on environmental policy-making of the next adhesion to European Community, made him neglect technocracy and industrialism prevalent within both the government and coalition partners. He also neglected bureaucratic obstacles and inertia of state administration structures to the creation of a new environmental and territory planning policy sector.

The minister's political optimism would even cause him to be blamed for power abuse and political inconsistency by sectors of his own entourage within the party and the government. In July 1982, the state secretary for territory planning and environment resigned due to feeling ignored in decision-making internal to the ministry, further blaming the minister of ineffective,

anti-establishment, and mainly verbose political behaviour. His leadership was then disputed within the party, and he was not elected to head the party electoral list for the next elections.

The monarchists' entry into parliament and in the government in the late 1970s resulted from occasional coalition arrangements that aimed at reaching a parliamentary majority that could give stability to a right-wing government. However, it was a unique opportunity. The monarchists' played an important role in the opposition to the nuclear program inside the government, and their «environmental friendly» discourse also induced the «greening» of the other conventional parties. The presence of the monarchists in the government contributed to make other mainstream parties to pay attention to important environmental and territory planning issues. It was due to the monarchists that many laws and environmental regulations started being prepared and approved, and many others were still in progress when they left. Laws regulating the quality of the air and water, the protection of dunes and other seaside sites, the protection of the Iberian lynx and sea mammals are just some examples. Many international agreements on environmental protection were included in Portuguese legislation, and legal competence to intervene in other policy sectors was gained in a lot of cases. In collaboration with other ministries, the first organic law for the ministry of the 'quality of life' and the state secretary of the environment was approved. A law creating an agriculture land reserve in Portugal was also established. In progress was still new legislation over industrial and urban noise, solid urban wastes, industrial use of chemicals, and an important territory planning law creating a nationwide ecological reserve extensive to many areas of the territory. This law aimed at blocking many public and private developing projects invading natural habitats and interesting ecological sites. Also being prepared was a basic law for the environment, which would provide this policy sector with basic legislative structures upon which to develop more consistent environmental policy action.

Of course, many laws and regulations included aspects that not all experts of the opposition and environmentalists agreed upon, but the fact is that environmentalists and experts on environmental studies started being called by other parties to enter electoral lists, in order to address environmental issues in electoral debates of the spring 1983 elections.

The monarchists entered the electoral campaign of the spring of 1983 elections as «the ecological party».<sup>11</sup> However, this attempt to impose a political leadership to the ecological movement did not persuade groups that autonomously were mobilizing on ecology issues, in which the monarchists were jocosely called the «landscapers». In any case, the low electoral score obtained by the Monarchic Party -- 0.5 per cent of votes -- was a surprise, since the party had participated in the last government and held six positions in parliament

The ecologist faction that led the party was immediately blamed for such an electoral defeat by internal opposition, although the leader did not head the electoral lists. Further attempts to make the ecologist leadership to resign and the party return to the original purity of its principles as a monarchic regime defender led the party to gradually fade out of the political scene. Its «ecologist» leader, though maintaining its support to monarchy, would continue his environmental fighting elsewhere. In 1985 he re-entered the parliament as an independent parliamentarian in the socialist electoral lists. Later, he won again the leadership of the party and prepared to be a candidate for the administration of Lisbon in local elections. This time he counted upon the support of some activists from ecological groups. Actually, his main political success in the next years would be his election as councilor to the local administration of Lisbon in the late 1980s, in which his electoral campaign centered on environmental issues.

### **3.5. The 'greening' of mainstream parties and environmental issues on the eve of the EEC adhesion**

The deep economic crisis affecting the nation, and sequels of the transition to democracy process initially centered politics around the stabilization of the political regime. After this, the issue was to prepare the economy (and society) to join the EEC. In spite of genuine efforts made by the monarchists to empower the environmental policy sector within state structures and governmental action, and of propaganda and educational activities promoted by environmental state agencies and groups nationwide, the lack of an influential and well-organized

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<sup>11</sup> Actually, it was said then that members of the ecologist faction planned to change the name of the party for Popular Ecologist Party.

environmental movement had certainly contributed to environmental blindness in Portuguese society until the mid 1980s. Actually, the environmental effects of the economic recovery in the early 1980s were virtually ignored.

The adhesion to international environmental regulations was frequently unconvincing, either by lack of implementation or by means of moratorium demands pressured by economic actors. Housing, agriculture, and breeding activities were located indiscriminately side-by-side with lagoons and other sources of water for domestic consumption. Plants discharged chemical waste directly into the rivers, making biologists despair about the conditions of water reserves. The rivers were seriously polluted, particularly in the northwest, where density of small and middle-sized industries, mainly textile, was very high.

The beaches around Lisbon became a health risk for the people. Authorities were unable to persecute oil tankers that used to clean containers offshore. Sometimes, small accidents in chemical industries were hidden from the public in order to avoid panic, while air pollution indicators of industrial regions showed that pollution was much higher than permitted by either national or international legislation. Ecological disasters in rivers, due to effluents from chemical plants, mining activities, and sand extraction became common. The press frequently denounced that products and technologies forbidden by EEC regulations were still imported by, or produced in Portugal. Finally, forest fires steadily became a big issue. In sum, an «ecological hell» was resulting from pursuing the «European dream».

However, university courses and scientific research on ecological sciences, nature conservation, territory planning, clean technologies, and other environmental-related scientific domains started being offered and addressed by universities and technological research institutes. Meanwhile, industry associations also started addressing environmental issues in conferences, congresses, and fair exhibitions, in view of the EEC adhesion scenario. Campaigns addressing nature conservation issues were also well-received by the public. The most celebrated was the campaign to protect the Iberian lynx, which was launched by the environmental administration and by a group called the *Liga para a Protecção da Natureza* (League for the Protection of Nature) with the support of park and forestry administrations, the European Council, and the International Union for Nature Conservation. This campaign was important in many aspects.

First of all, it was the first big campaign on nature conservation issues to be held in Portugal. Also, the amount of resources mobilized for this campaign and the kind of cooperation between environmental groups and the administration made the event a mark. Thousands of posters and stamps had been distributed all over the country. Articles and publicity on the issue invaded periodicals, and video spots and documentaries were released by TV channels. Furthermore, it also caused the eucalyptus issue to be raised in public agendas for the first time, since a big forestry program using the eucalyptus tree was planned for the mountains where the last lynxes lived.

Afforestation with the eucalyptus tree had started in the 1960s, and slowly proceeded without catching the the public's attention. Due to the fast-growing characteristic of this exotic tree, good price raw materials could be obtained in the internal market by the flourishing cellulose industry. Occupied with mobilizing on the nuclear issue, ecologists did not raise the issue in public agendas until the early 1980s. However, a wide forestry program mobilizing cellulose companies, private landowners, and the state itself was established since 1977, receiving financial support from the World Bank. The cellulose industry had been nationalized in 1975. Since enterprises of the sector were under the tutelage of the ministry of industry, they often developed autonomous forestry plans irrespective of the ministry of agriculture and forestry policy initiatives. Sometimes, they even benefited from insufficient forestry regulations and nature protection legislation. By directly negotiating with private landowners and communal land administrations, they often carried out fast-growing tree afforestation plans that invaded agriculture land and protected areas.

Similarly, putative nature conservation activities and policy initiatives by state environmental agencies confronted populations and local administrations, whose development plans at the local level often obstructed attempts to effectively apply nature conservation policy action. For instance, some municipalities proceeded with development activities completely neglecting environmental and nature protection considerations, even if they were connected with important sites protected by law. Others asked for resources and legal means in order to make natural parks a local development factor.

This debate over local development *versus* nature conservation emerged in public and political agendas when a local government asked central state authorities to build a road inside the most important park of the country in the northern region. The municipality was one of the poorest and most isolated in the whole region, and local leaders were clever in wanting to profit from the insufficiency of the natural parks' administration structures.

However, depending on the scope of social and economic interests at stake, there were also cases in which local administrations, under pressure of local grass roots protesting, achieved to anticipate central authorities in blocking the destruction of traditional forest by timber-merchants. Then, the central state administration was pressured to buy large forestry areas and to integrate them in natural reserves. But more often than not, a potential natural reserve by the seaside was viewed as only a desert or an abandoned area that only tourist industry infrastructures could «save». Actually, by the seaside and in rural surroundings of big cities, many areas had to quickly be declared as protected landscape areas by law, in order to block urban land market speculation and the tourist and building industries from invading.

Although privileging the nuclear issue, ecological groups also addressed other urgent environmental issues. For instance, in March 1981, some northern groups held a meeting to decide on anti-nuclear mobilization activities, but during debates they remarked how they were neglecting the pollution of northern rivers caused by industries pouring all sorts of coloured chemical effluents into them. A big propaganda festival and other actions mobilizing on the issue were then organized, which counted upon the support of state agencies for environmental issues.

Actually, the ecological impact of industries pouring chemicals directly into the rivers all over the country was destroying many ecologically clean sites. Regulations either to prevent or make polluters pay damages were completely lacking. Current legislation on these issues was often too old and inadequate. Sometimes it seemed the legislation even promoted impunity and pollution by specifying indemnities and fees that could not equate reasonable damage evaluations.

Although the newly industrialized northwestern region was the most affected by chemical effluents, the situation in other littoral and inner regions was also of concern. Concerns

over water sources for human consumption aggravated by drought started alarming the public health authorities.

After the 'green' monarchists had entered the government and the parliament as part of the majority coalition, and although they had not been very successful in reversing the policy priority status of environmental issues, they had certainly enhanced a 'green' flame emerging from other mainstream parliamentary parties. The Socialist Party, then the opposition, started pressuring the parliament about environmental issues, where a working commission for the environment began to show more initiative. Sometimes even parliamentarians from the majority joined the monarchists and the opposition in blaming governmental policy sectors for environmental discard.

The spring fall elections 1983 marked the first turning point concerning environmental issues within governmental and political spheres. The Monarchic Party, which had long since monopolized the «ownership» of environmental issues, practically disappeared from the political scene. However, other parties, from the far left, non-parliamentary to the mainstream left and moderate center in parliament, started looking more cautiously to the environmental field, if not only for electoral reasons. The importance given by the EEC and more developed European nations to environmental policies had certainly played a role in the virtual 'greening' of mainstream, conventional parties.

Since no absolute majority emerged directly from the elections in 1983, the two most popular parties -- the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party, both constituting the moderate center of the party politics cleavage -- signed a coalition agreement to form a new cabinet, known as the «central block» government. The minister of the 'quality of life' and the state secretary of the environment were members of the Social Democratic Party.

The new state secretary, who was recruited from an environmental active group of young experts in energy and territory planning issues that had emerged within the party, suddenly approved a law creating a national ecological reserve, previously prepared by his predecessor. This ecological reserve included widespread areas near the sea, river banks, surroundings of habitats and ecological sites, perimeters of natural parks and reserves, as well as other areas bordering roads, lagoons, original forest settings, etc.



The law was being prepared by the environmental administration in former governments. Essentially, it aimed at blocking new urban and tourist industry settings that local governments were indiscriminately approving due to the lack of legal means to stop the invasion of environmental sites by developers of the tourist industry. A global revision of legislation to preventing environmental damages in ecological sites and protected areas was also initiated.

New environmental legislation involving local governments in the administration of natural reserves, parks, and protected landscape areas was also approved. Also collaboration between the state secretaries of environment and forestry intensified. The latter was led by an old professor from the Agriculture Institute of the University of Lisbon, who the Socialist Party imposed in coalition negotiations against pressures of the «cellulose lobby». In the meantime, the new state secretary of environment launched a campaign for demolishing clandestine housing that had been tolerated in natural reserves and protected areas by sea and in the mountains, throughout the years.

Meanwhile, the relationships with the European Community in the pre-adhesion period rapidly intensified for the field of environmental policies, namely in terms of enlarging international cooperation over environmental problems that went beyond the national scope. For instance, in the summer of 1983, Portuguese environmental authorities participated in an emergency plan to fight sea pollution around the Iberian Peninsula, as an extension of another agreement involving the North Sea. Furthermore, a basic law for the environment, including innovations already established in other European countries were prepared. By means of this law, the «polluter pays» principle would finally enter the Portuguese legislation, thereby making industries responsible for treating their own effluents and responsible for damages caused to the environment. The law also declared environmental associations as «public interest groups», allowing them to directly address courts over environmental damages and to participate in policy-making processes.

However, important obstacles in launching a proper environmental policy sector came from state administration structures themselves. Either by institutional inertia or due to administrative corporate interests, state administration bodies and technical services tended to resist any kind of restructuring initiatives implying to give up of, or to share, their legal and

policy-making competence. The dispersal of competence through several administrative and technical services shared by other ministries blocked any kind of consistent intervention in this policy field, even though competence of the environmental administrative sector was in most cases merely consultative. The best example was in the case of Portugal's first natural park, created in 1971, which was under the tutelage of the ministry of agriculture since its creation. Only in the fall of 1984 did it finally enter the tutelage of the ministry for the 'quality of life' and state secretary of the environment.

This is why the ministry of the 'quality of life' and the state secretary for the environment had to play the contradictory role of an «environmental opposition» inside the government, having to face the ministries of social equipment and public works, industry and energy, and agriculture and forestry about environmental issues that state bureaucracy defined in other ways. Of course, this situation was not new for those embracing the environmental portfolio of the Government. It had previously blocked many genuine efforts by Monarchic Party members.

In the summer of 1984 the minister and state secretary of the 'quality of life' and environment were replaced. However, the new cabinet-heads of the policy sector, recruited from both coalition parties, maintained similar efforts to impose this policy domain within state administration structures. Particularly, the most important policy issues launched by their predecessors continued to be handled with diligence. However, the chaos of the environmental situation of the country reflected on the chaos of the environmental policy sector, making the new state secretary for the environment «confess» to being unable say anything about industries polluting water flows, or about urban and industrial sewers and the like. A full restructuring of the policy sector urged, thus, on the eve of European Community adhesion.

The environmental performance described so far explains why Portugal presented the Commission 38 derogation requests, invoking either economic difficulties or inability of the environmental administrative structures to reach European environmental standards in the period agreed. The Portuguese administration considered the European standards too advanced. The case deserved comments by European parliamentarians that analysed the environmental dossier of the Adhesion Treaty. The amount of derogation demands denounced a negative predisposition by Portuguese authorities concerning the environmental policy field, and were said to delay

fulfilling the minimal levels of environmental patterns prevalent in EEC countries by at least ten years.

## **Chapter 4. - The Politics of Environmental Groups (I) - First Period (1974-85)**

### **4.1. The conservationist tradition**

Before 1974, it was not easy to freely express concerns or protest about environmental issues in Portugal. The late political regime persecuted any kind of independent, autonomous, civil initiatives by the citizenry questioning the political *status quo* or governmental action in any field. Only one party was admitted. Political action by moderate opposition, communists, and the «radical left» was illegal and clandestine, their mobilization efforts concentrating mainly on democracy and opposing colonial war. In what concerns the workers' movement, unions were only admitted as a branch of, and under strict control by, the politico-administrative system. Student movement protest activities, which emerged in the 1960s following the «mood» and similar patterns of their counterparts in Europe and the United States, were thoroughly ignored by the media due to censorship and steady control of press, radio, TV, and books, while clandestine press was tightly persecuted.

For these reasons and because the degree of industrialization and urbanization of the country was still very low, protest and mobilization over environmental problems were virtually unknown. Nevertheless, inspired by similar pioneer conservationist organizations from abroad, the first environmental association was founded in 1948 by a group of natural science researchers and other scholars from the university (Matos 1995: 21; Pimenta et al. 1993: 147; and Fernandes 1982: 15). The *Liga para a Protecção da Natureza -- LPN* (League for the Protection of Nature) has since produced a lot of scientific materials on environmental and nature conservation issues. Pioneer field research carried out by its members had served as a technical and scientific basis for the creation of the first natural parks and reserves, whose legislation and administrative structures were initiated in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Matos 1995: 23; Pimenta et al. 1993: 147).

A celebrated poet of Portuguese contemporary literature is said to have given the first impulse to the conservationist movement in the 1940s (Caldas 1991: 625). The poet's passion for

the *Arrábida* mountains by the coast not far from Lisbon, made him blame the devastation of the original forest carried out by coal-makers after the energy crises of World War II. Following the appeal of Sebastião da Gama, a group of academics and students at the University of Lisbon -- entomologists, biologists, geologists, agriculture and forest engineers, etc. -- founded the *Liga para a Protecção da Natureza* (LPN) in 1948.

By this time, the very meeting of young academics to express concerns over the opening of a road through the mountains of *Arrábida* sounded suspicious to authorities, which immediately ordered a detailed investigation by the political police to the *LPN* and its associates. The activity of the association was, thus, confined to research, editing of scientific work, and the promotion of nature conservation inside the academy.

Either as academics or experts serving in state administration, the members of this group influenced the agriculture and forestry administration to launch nature conservation initiatives, thereby fostering the creation of the first parks and natural reserves. Administrative practices, conservation policies, and scientific work of several parts of the world where parks and nature conservation activities had pioneered, served as models for convincing the authorities of the need to protect some important sites, also including areas in the colonies.

The first parks and natural reserves were created in the African colonies, and in 1970 the *Serviço Nacional de Parques e Reservas Naturais* (National Service for Parks and Natural Reserves) was set up by the ministry of agriculture. Although facing several legislative obstacles and lack of resources to fulfill the tasks it had been created for, this administrative structure allowed for the creation of the first National Park located in *Peneda-Gerês* in 1971, a huge area of wild forest near the northern border, which has continued to maintain a special status in Portuguese park legislation.

The LPN's research and propaganda for the promotion of nature conservation during the environmental «blackout» of the dictatorship must be emphasized. The LPN's participation in preparatory field studies for the creation of parks and natural reserves left an important collection of materials about native landscape, fauna, and flora. A lot of LPN members continued for years pushing the conservationist cause ahead in the media, in associations, or in the environmental administration of the «new regime».

Actually, the small environmental administrative sector of the late political regime had practically passed through political changes of the mid 1970s without troubles. Park administration services continued to propose and see the creation of new parks and natural reserves being approved by successive governments, while conservationists found the opportunity to carry on with nature conservation activities.

The same applies to the *Comissão Nacional do Ambiente* (National Commission for the Environment), which was a state agency created in 1971. It was formed by a group of experts recruited in the university and the administration, some of them also linked to the LPN. The agency was set up to organize the Portuguese delegation of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, in Stockholm in 1972. It survived the *coup d'état* of April 1974 as well. Therefore, its important consultative and propaganda role was recognized by the new political authorities, who empowered the agency with resources and further expanded its scope of activities and competence. The agency organized official state delegations at international meetings on environmental and nature conservation issues. It had also pioneered an administrative collaboration with environmental groups, mainly funding activities of field research and propaganda. When the administration services of the environmental policy sector were re-structured and the basic law for the environment was approved in the late 1980s, the agency was replaced by a new one called *Instituto Nacional do Ambiente* (National Institute for the Environment). Meanwhile, it acted as an important source of expertise and information on environmental issues, further participating in the elaboration of important environmental laws and in the restructuring of the environmental administration.

After April 1974, the LPN remained faithful to the original profile. The members continued to dedicated to field work about natural and ecological systems, and the association avoided any kind of direct participation in politically framed debates over environmental issues until recently. Rewards in having an image of «scientific authority» on environmental and nature conservation issues counterbalanced being virtually unknown by the public for years (Pimenta et al. 1993: 147; Fernandes 1982: 15; and Rosa 1990: 61). To a certain extent, the LPN served as a model for many environmental organizations that emerged during the last twenty years. As environmental issues in Portugal came increasingly to the foreground, some changes occurred in

the traditional stand of this group, which gradually started giving more relief to participation in public arenas over environmental and development policy issues. But their members, and the organization itself, often refused to be labeled as «ecologists» (Fernandes 1982: 14R; and Lopes 1984: 12R).

Apart from this organization, only a few isolated activists had also pioneered propaganda on environmental issues before 1974, giving rise to a trend of radical ecology pioneers that emerged by the early 1970s.

#### **4.2. Pioneering 'radical' political ecology cultures**

Once press freedom, full political rights, and democracy were restored, some of these pioneers would plunge into a kind of radical, deep ecology discourse, often coloured by an up-to-date leftist rhetoric proper to the «times of revolution». They suddenly came to light promoting their critical view of capitalism and industrial civilization. By insisting on the idea that ecology was «something more than simply natural landscape preservation and the protection of birds», they started diffusing and translating the writings of classical and radical ecologists such as Pierre Albert, René Dumont, Jean Dorst, René Dubos, Max Nicholson, and others into Portuguese (Lopes 1984: 12R).

Actually, after the *coup d'état* of 25 April 1974, many grass roots associations and politically-oriented organizations handling all kinds of issues and interests, including ecology, sprang up the day after. Moving in on the same wave, several isolated small groups calling for a «new» lifestyle or to embrace ideas of anti-consumerism, pacifism, natural food and medicines, and the protection of nature, as expanded by classical ecologists from the 1960s, also emerged in Portugal. These groups were often regarded by the public and the media as sprouting up from the same seeds as other newly expanded *utopia* movements, which the «times of revolution» brought to light. In spite of their efforts to strictly differentiate from «far left» groups, the political and ideological climate of public debates and of grass roots upheavals mobilizing on welfare, development, participatory democracy, and on worker movement issues did not favour the diffusion and implant of their cause. At the opposite of «far left» groups that had previously

developed in fights against dictatorship, environmental groups lacked organizational resources, and they often sprang up only to disappear the next day through internal dissension, one group serving as a constituency basis for the next.

However, the involvement of most political and collective actors in the reconstruction of democracy or in state power politics, drove them to virtually ignore the emergence of environmental issues and values. Of course, damages caused in neighbourhoods by a local ecological accident or pollution caused by a plant were already a good opportunity to reiterate contestation to the political and economic establishment and protests by local populations. Resorting to anti-capitalist rhetoric and ideologies, «far left» groups were the first to impell local grass roots fights against pollution. However, these protests rarely made reference to specific environmental values.

Within the ideologically-blended context of extra-parliamentary politics of the mid 1970s, the ecological pioneers could hardly afford to impose the novelty of their values. Yet, these pioneers lacked the organizational resources for either supporting or giving a sustainable political bias to local protesting. They had the ideas but not the means and skills of civic entrepreneurship. Therefore, they started launching the seeds of the movement by diffusing their critique of capitalism, industrialism, and consumerism, mostly inspired by the writings of Ivan Illich, Michel Bosquet/André Gorz, and other classical or radical ecologists, whose ideas they mingled within a wider ideological frame that often included oriental philosophies, alternative medicines, naturopathy, vegetarianism, etc. The ecological discourse often combined with the «leftist» rhetoric, seemingly imported from several trends of Marxism-Leninism and anarchist critiques of capitalism, and from «counterculture» critiques of industrial civilization.

In May 1974, some newcomer ecologists joined the pioneers, and under the leadership of Afonso Cautela -- a journalist and celebrated pioneer of ecology -- tried to overcome to an organizational structure able to involve all people attracted by this wide range of ideological trends and alternative politics. In July 1974, they founded the *Movimento Ecológico Português* (Portuguese Ecological Movement), which hoped to be a widefront apt to congregate ecologists and a huge range of alternatives, including macrobiotics practioners, vegetarians, antinuclearists, non-violence activists, conservationists, and others. However, they suddenly fell into deep



ideological dissension. The opposition to the nuclear power program of the government was their only point of agreement upon which to launch the movement action. Actually, they had been the first to propose a nuclear moratorium, and a petition endorsed by 500 people rejecting the nuclear power production program was organized even before the nuclear power program of the government went public (Lopes 1984: p. 13R).

The newly founded *Movimento Ecológico Português* released a newsletter called *Frente Ecológica* (Ecological Front). The group run a bookshop in lisbon headquarters that mostly diffused the leader's writings. Titles such as «Ecological Fights and Class Struggles», «Ecological Manifest Against the Inflation and the Cost of Living», «The Political Consciousness of Nature and the 'Class Struggle' within the Animal Kingdom», «Contribution to the Ecological Revolution», «Ecology Against Unemployment», and seemingly others are found in the collection. Indeed, they were well-suited to attract young people accustomed to a leftist rhetoric but who refused the restrictive scope and centralism of organizational models dominant in the «far left» scene.

Propaganda focused, thus, on what Cautela called «the targets and foundations of the Ecological Movement». Mobilization on concrete pollution issues was thought as useless, deceiving, and even hazardous, in that it meant a «symptom-reaction strategy», whose immediacy «risked to distract ecological militancy from fundamental contestation of industrial civilization».<sup>1</sup> The *Movimento Ecológico* was thus thought to be more an organizational arena for reflection and ideological debate than an organizational tool for mobilizing on concrete environmental issues. But it pioneered, in many respects, the organizational style and ecological discourse prevailing in the whole movement until the early 1980s, and distanced the movement from party politics.

Similar to other pioneers of radical ecology, the long-time leader of *Movimento Ecológico* defined «ecology as a way of life» (Fernandes: 1982, 14R), and rejected the growing politicization of the environmental movement occurring in Europe as «an appropriation of genuine ecological values from outsiders», which risked «to distract people from the

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<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the collection of papers.

fundamentals». He saw the ecological movement in most advanced nations as typically borne upon the «emotional fear and welfare monotony» of rich people, its strength being largely exaggerated by the press (*ibid*).

However, the political context that since April 1974 gave rise to grass roots upheavals and political action over democracy, political participation, and welfare issues, was also an opportunity to protest about environmental issues. At the local level, grass roots movements protested the pollution of rivers by leather plants' chemical effluents. Farmer claimed for a fair compensation of damages caused by effluents poured by cellulose plants. Locals protested over the stinking air coming out from chemical industries. In several cases, activists of the *Movimento Ecológico Português* were able to organize protest meetings in site. For the most part, however, they approached events by either «theorizing» in the group newsletter, or by diffusing news to the and in pamphlets distributed in the streets (Lopes 1984: 13R).

Other groups, sometimes including anarchists, libertarians, and «far left» activists coming from the breakdown of Marxist-Leninist groups when the stabilization of the democratic regime started taking place, emerged also around similar propaganda activities. The «new» ideas of different trends of ecology imported from the international movement were widely diffused. Apart from similar anti-establishment stands which they all shared, strict mobilization on concrete environmental issues was still rare in the 1970s, with the exception for the nuclear issue. Most efforts were put into publishing. Papers by foreign ecologists addressing alternative technologies, non-violence politics, bio-agriculture, energy policy, and other themes were translated. Often drawing upon radical ideological ideas and rhetoric similar to «far-left» action groups prevailing in non-parliamentary politics, it was hard for newly formed ecological groups to highlight their «difference» and claim for the «ownership» of ecological issues by means of discourse alone (e.g. Cautela 1977: 316-317).

Nevertheless, it has to be said that the first attempts to coordinate mobilization and organizational activities was achieved through the creation of the *Comissão Coordenadora Ecológica* (Coordinating Ecological Commission). In spite of its short life, this organizational structure played a very important role in articulating mobilization activities of all groups and singular activists on the nuclear issue. It contributed to the climate of unity that led all groups, as

well as new and old-comer activists of all trends, to the Anti-nuclear Festival of 1978 (Lopes 1984: 13R; Amigos da Terra, n/ date: 79-80).

#### **4.3. Mobilizing on the nuclear power issue**

In May 1976, the National Commission for the Environment took in charge the celebrations of the World Day for the Environment, after the proposal of the United Nations Program for the Environment. The celebrations included festivals in several cities, comprising cultural shows, open air sports, recreation activities, and propaganda initiatives about nature protection and environmental defence issues. In Lisbon, a symbolic traffic blockade took place downtown. However, the most important environmental issue was the nuclear power plant project, and the festival turned out to be an anti-nuclear propaganda day.

Instability of state authority and a generalized climate of grass roots contestation that emerged after the coup gave a particular political context to the first anti-nuclear power mobilizations. When nuclear plans for *Ferrel* were made public, the groups *Movimento Ecológico Português* and *Viver É Preciso* started organizing meetings in towns and villages of the region to promote the emerging of grass roots upheavals similar to those mobilized by the worker and revolutionary movements. Mobilization efforts culminated in a big ecological festival in the neighbourhood in 1978 (Pimenta et al. 1993: 148-9; Rosa 1990: 61; and Lemos 1988: 48). Public attention was given for the first time to ecological groups, and the Portuguese youth entered the anti-nuclear «mood».

The mobilization of the locals in *Ferrel* peaked in March 1976. Mobilized by ecological groups, local demonstrators blocked preparatory works that the electricity company initiated to study the natural features of the local. The church bells rang incessantly that morning, while locals concentrated and marched towards the site where work was taking place. The workers abandoned the place, while the holes made in the ground were emptied. During the next few days, the *Comissão de Apoio à Luta contra a Ameaça Nuclear (CALCAN)* (Commission to Support Fighting Against the Nuclear Threat) was founded by a huge people's assembly held in the municipality headquarters. A telegram was addressed to the prime minister to stop the

nuclear power project. The telegram was endorsed by inhabitant commissions of all villages in the surroundings, local and regional newspapers, local associations, high schools, health services, trade unions, bank employees, municipal services, small merchants, and so on.

It has to be said that the mobilization of the locals did not have more impact than other customary local upheavals and action initiatives over welfare, development, employment, housing, or neighbourhood issues that began at the grass roots level. The political agenda was momentarily centred on the first parliamentary elections after the Constitution had been approved. From these elections depended, for the first time, the formation of a new government. Thus, the electoral campaign focused mainly on political party projects and on development and welfare issues, calming the contestation about the nuclear issue.

In spite of this, ecologists and anti-nuclearists proceeded with gathering signatures for petitions and organizing propaganda about the issue. Efforts were also made to coordinate activities of all groups involved. In February 1977 the group *Viver É Preciso* issued a manifest entitled «We Are All Inhabitants of *Ferrel*», calling all antinuclearists to organize solidary commissions in schools, hospitals, workplaces, universities, etc. In June the same year, all groups and anti-nuclear activists met for the first time in *Caldas da Rainha*, a town nearby *Ferrel*. The aim was to prepare a campaign for a «Moratorium on the Nuclear Program», which the periodical *Frente Ecológica* issued by the *Movimento Ecológico Português* was appealing for since the fall of 1974.<sup>2</sup>

About one hundred people representing anti-nuclear groups participated in the meeting. Since then, representatives of the most important ecological groups from all over the country started meeting regularly to coordinate mobilization. A commission called *Coordenadora Ecológica* (Ecological Coordination) was established as a peak organization of the movement. It guaranteed the flowing of information among groups, promoting their agreement about common

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<sup>2</sup> Most data and information for Chapter 4 was gathered from *Frente Ecológica*, and *Pela Vida - Informação e Coordenação Ecológica - Suplemento da Gazeta das Caldas*, whose collections were thoroughly consulted.

mobilization actions. Since there were not many active groups, this kind of peak coordination could functioned very well.

Expectations of group expansion were then optimistic. The nuclear issue was very appealing. Yet, the end of the revolutionary period made «far left» groups break down and many «ex-leftists» joined the anti-nuclear movement. The *Coordenadora Ecológica* was a very simple and decentralized organizational structure. Representatives of groups could easily meet to debate and organize common initiatives of mobilization and propaganda. In September 1977, two important decisions were made. First, it was decided to support the foundation of a periodical, which would be called *Pela Vida* (For Life). For more than ten years, it was issued as a supplement of a regional monthly newspaper where the first nuclear plant was planned to be built. Although run by the initiative of one activist alone, it counted upon regular collaboration from other singular activists and groups -- particularly the group *Amigos da Terra*. Also, anti-nuclearists decided to organize a big anti-nuclear Festival in *Caldas da Rainha* -- the town was now becoming the symbolic center of anti-nuclear protest -- under the motto «For Life, Against Nuclear Power».

The festival was formally organized by the newly founded periodical. Ecologist nuclei from all over the country collaborated in launching the initiative. About 2,000 people participated in debates and conferences run by energy experts, physicians, intellectuals, and opinion-makers. Musical-shows counted upon performances by the well-known protest-singers that used to participate in similar grass roots upheavals and left movement initiatives. Participants also had the opportunity to visit exhibitions addressing the risks of nuclear power and information about the anti-nuclear movement worldwide, whose materials had previously been obtained through contacts with anti-nuclear groups abroad. There was also participants from Spanish anti-nuclear groups, and Inhabitant Commissions from the *Ferrel* region. Even the state secretary for the environment was invited, but instead of participating he just sent a message -- there were that the government would not let him go. Finally, there was a long march to the site where the nuclear plant was to be installed. The demonstration remained peaceful and some pounds of potatoes offered by *Ferrel* peasants were symbolically planted on the site.

The event was widely reported by the press. It would become an exalted mark of the anti-nuclear movement in Portugal, although some failures in the organization and logistics of the festival were apparent. In particular, organizers blamed local administrations run by right wing party members, and some local associations supposedly under the influence of left wing parliamentary parties that refused to participate in the festival and to give a help.

Nevertheless, in February the periodical *Pela Vida* meaningfully titled its newsreport about the festival by asking «And Now, What's Next?». In sections dedicated to news about group initiatives there were reports about groups and anti-nuclear nuclei suddenly emerging all over the country in high schools, universities, and associations for recreation and culture. They all wanted to mobilize on the nuclear and ecological issues. Similar reports, fundraising to support the costs of the festival, and articles about the future of the movement invaded the periodical for several issues. All together, this proved the impact of the festival for the growth of the movement.

Yet, the festival also had some impact on a political level. Although most participants of the festival came from far left wing groups, there were also monarchists and many socialist and communist followers (Matos 1995: 18). Mainstream parties were expectant about the White Paper on the nuclear issue commanded by the socialist prime minister. However, many socialist parliamentarians applauded a formal declaration made in Parliament by one of them saluting the festival.

The Communist Party's stand was particularly awkward. The orthodoxy and ideological support of the party to Soviet Union, a nuclear potency, made its opposition to the nuclear program not very convincing. Yet, the Communists tended to view any autonomous political action by radical and «new left» groups as a division within the left wing movement, whose leadership (and «ownership») they claimed. This made the Party more an observer than a supporter or an opponent of the anti-nuclear movement.

In order to take advantage of the momentary impact of the festival, the Ecological Coordination Commission called for the 4th National Meeting to be held in April 1978. Great expectations were put on parliamentary debates over the nuclear program. The Ecological Coordinating Commission intended to meet group representatives to decide on the next

initiatives, organizational forms, and criteria to further open the movement to other groups and singular activists. Expectations for enlarging the movement were then notorious. The periodical *Pela Vida* published proposals by several activists addressing the need for a new organizational step for the anti-nuclear movement. Some proposed the launching of a federation that should aggregate all local, autonomous groups. Others asked for a debate over a left wing political ecology program, proposing the creation of a political biased movement.

In spite of this, the *Movimento Ecológico Português*, which first started mobilizing on the nuclear issue, was splitting off, thereby initiating a process of breakdown that touched most groups that pioneered mobilization and political action on nuclear and ecological issues. Moreover, the meeting of the Ecological Coordination Commission concluded without any kind of agreement about its future, or any other kind of peak coordination for the movement. This practically meant the dismantling of the Coordinating Commission and the refusal to create the Portuguese Anti-nuclear Committee in its place. Consensus was only achieved about the need to mobilize groups at the local level.

The overall inability of ecologists to keep coordinating their mobilization activities over the nuclear issue gave the opportunity to other groups from the far-left wing movement to enter the scene and momentarily dispute the «ownership» of the issue. This was the case of the most important far-left wing group, which mobilized some thousand militants and had still enough influence at the grass roots level of the worker and student movements to elect one parliamentarian in general elections. The group decided to call its second international youth meeting in *Ferrel*. The weekend meeting focused on the nuclear issue and included a march to the site of the nuclear plant.

Although the event had the usual political and public impact of initiatives called by the group, it certainly had some consequences for the future of the antinuclear movement. The fact that current ecological groups were not being able to coordinate mobilization on the nuclear issue, facilitated other groups to benefit from the mobilization potentials of the issue. The campaigning over the nuclear issue by experienced leftist groups and their defining the issue on the basis of essentially anti-capitalist political values, made the situation hazardous for the future of the anti-nuclear movement. First it risked weakening the mobilization potentialities of the

nuclear issue, due to its falling into the now decaying ideological and organizational ghetto of leftist groups. At the same time, ecologists risked dissolving their public image into the leftist movement, instead of appearing as bearers of an alternative and autonomous cause.

In any case, the repeatedly postponing of the White Paper on the nuclear project had the effect of momentary lowering the nuclear issue on political and public agendas, forcing leftist groups to drop out. But the nuclear issue still had other important mobilizers. As we saw, the most penetrating critique to nuclear plans appearing in public arenas was undoubtedly coming from a group of young physicians and engineers from the Technical University of Lisbon, which meanwhile had released an incisive manifesto on energy provision policies asking «for a national debate over the nuclear option». The manifesto was endorsed by around one hundred scientists and experts on energy problems. They also had organized the *Comissão Promotora do Debate Nacional Sobre a Opção Nuclear* (Commission for the Promotion of the Public Debate on the Nuclear Option), which was joined by another two hundred scientists and intellectuals. The organization had no other purposes than to coordinate participation in public arenas, but the opposition to the nuclear issue held by this group of experts was decisive.

First of all, they predominantly resorted to the media and other kinds of public arenas particularly opened to experts -- such as scientific meetings, conferences, and debates promoted by either the state or private agencies. Then, they addressed the issue under two major issue-frames: the need for a global energy provision policy, and the technological and scientific status of nuclear power. Insisting on technical and scientific arguments and, in general, the need to make a decision about long-term plans for energy provision, they contested the issue by directly approaching the issue-frames of the government about it. In other words, if it was to mainly consider a developing policy issue, this meant that well-founded energy provision plans confirmed by economic development scenarios had to be presented, and they were not. The other approach had to do with the molding of scientific and technological expertise in Portugal to fit a new and potentially risky technology. The fact that the experts were divided in public arenas, thereby having an amplifying effect upon risk perception by the public, meant that, at least, a say would have to be given by both sides. The anti-nuclear experts had, thus, an amplifying impact



on public opinion and political actors. They also ratified anti-nuclear groups' mobilization, giving their action further legitimation.

When the nuclear power stations planned by Spanish authorities near the border started causing a slight deflection of public attention from the Portuguese nuclear program, ecological groups began also address the issue. However, many groups had started dispersing after the anti-nuclear festival of 1978, particularly because of the failure of the fourth meeting of the Ecological Coordinating Commission. In spite of this, the upsurge of grass roots protesting over Spanish nuclear power plant was a new opportunity for groups to re-initiate coordination efforts. However, an appeal for a new meeting of the Ecological Coordinating Commission to organize an anti-nuclear demonstration in *Miranda do Douro* -- on the *Douro* river banks some 15 kilometers from the Sayago nuclear plant site -- was not convincing enough. Groups continued to proceed with their isolated propaganda activities, which culminated in separate celebrations of the Anti-nuclear World Day of 1978.

The same happened the next year. In the summer of 1979, anti-nuclear festivals were organized in several localities in celebration of the World Day Against Nuclear Power, but only one festival taking place in Lisbon had some impact. It had been called by the *Comité Antinuclear de Lisboa* (Anti-nuclear Committee of Lisbon), and included conferences about energy problems, demonstrations, exhibitions, and musical shows. *Ferrel*, *Miranda do Douro*, and *Sayago* converged then as main protest symbols.

Successive preparatory studies commanded by the government had the virtue of keeping the nuclear issue out of the public eye. Ecological groups had then not much more than «rumours» about the government dealing with the issue. Propaganda efforts concentrated essentially on every year's celebration of the World Day Against Nuclear Power. Their preference for distancing from party politics blocked virtually any participation in electoral campaigns. Unable to raise more stringent issues in public arenas or to have further impact on the political field, mobilization activities by most ecological and anti-nuclear groups were limited to editing newsletters and other propaganda means, which at the most aimed at maintaining the constituency informed about anti-nuclear activities all over the world.

In March 1981, northern groups concentrated their efforts on an anti-nuclear demonstration to be held that summer in *Miranda do Douro*, near the *Sayago* nuclear plant site. The initiative mobilized local populations and local administrations in the region, and had the support of other groups from Lisbon. Spanish anti-nuclear groups also participated. The demonstration took the form of a weekend anti-nuclear festival. Conferences and exhibitions were organized, focusing on risks and ecological impacts of nuclear power plants, and on the environmental and economic consequences for the region resulting from the *Sayago* plant.

Because of the success of the festival and of demonstrations held in *Miranda do Douro*, groups began meeting again to coordinate activities and prepare wide mobilization on the Spanish nuclear power plant's affair for the year of 1982. The *Comité de Luta Contra o Nuclear* (Fighting Committee Against Nuclear Power) planned to organize a new summer festival in *Miranda do Douro*, aiming to maintain the high mobilization of locals and to reiterate protests over the presumable inconsistency of Portuguese nuclear authorities in negotiations with Spain about the *Sayago* nuclear plant. For one week, a few ecologists and anti-nuclearists from all over the country gathered in *Miranda do Douro* for a new anti-nuclear festival.

This time, however, the receptivity by the locals seemed to be less enthusiastic, although local authorities collaborated in logistics and other facilities. Failures in the organization of the festival caused some performances to be canceled, and added to the weak participation of the locals. A symbolic occupation of the border services was also canceled. The weak participation of locals was imputed to promises of the government to local governments about building a dam in the region and a highway linking the town to littoral regions. Other rewards for the region were said to also be under analysis.

Actually, the comparison with mobilization of locals on the other side of the border was contrasting. Although located on a *quasi*-desert region -- 75 per cent of the population living within the security area of *Sayago* was from the Portuguese side -- a strong protest movement led by local governments from different political parties and by ecological groups was under way on the Spanish side. Around 300 young ecologists called by the most influential ecological groups from Lisbon and Oporto could not avoid frustration in face of the indifference of the locals in *Miranda do Douro*. But frustration meant also the inability of groups to mobilize

beyond their own constituency for an anti-nuclear protest journey. Organizational failures apart, ecological leaders ended up being involved in personal quarrels and ideological controversy about the best way to lead a politically engaged protest movement on the nuclear issue, which they all agreed was momentary the essential axis of ecological politics.

Meanwhile, the National Energy Provision Plan and policy orientations of the new minister of industry and energy made it more difficult for the nuclear issue to remain high on public agendas, although some issue-related events, such as nuclear waste disposal offshore in the Atlantic Ocean, often were giving them opportunities for protest actions. Therefore, when the conclusions of the Energy Provision Plan were announced, which included a recommendation for the installation of a set of nuclear power plants, anti-nuclearists were entirely unorganized for launching full mobilization actions against it.

Nevertheless, collecting signatures for a petition demanding further information about both the Energy Provision Plan and negotiations with Spain over the security of nuclear plants near the border was organized by *Os Amigos da Terra*. About 4,500 signatures were collected and the petition was presented to the government and the parliament. Actually, the group *Os Amigos da Terra* was the only one prepared to foster some mobilization initiatives. After the success of this initiative, the group promptly called for a wide of all groups to coordinate mobilization against the Energy Provision Plan. The participation of ecologists in the elections of the first semester of 1983 was then particularly viewed by many as an opportunity to enhance public and political mobilization on the nuclear issue. But the meeting concluded like former attempts to achieve group coordination. Political divergence, ideological cleavages, and opposed views about the political context of anti-nuclear politics overwhelmed the urgency of acting together. This time, cleavages consisted of splitting groups mobilizing on the nuclear issue and groups more oriented for long-term, nature conservation activities. Thus, they had different views about the urgency of participating in political battles. Splits blocked any possibility of consensus, unity, and collaboration in the short term. But they managed to agree on organizing a first national meeting of ecologists the next year.

The electoral campaign almost ignored the nuclear issue. Only the Socialist Party promised to ask for deeper preparatory studies in order to allow for a decision over the issue in

the following six months. Since the Spanish government had dismissed building the nuclear power plant in *Sayago*, the concerns about the nuclear issue were the plant stations previewed by the National Energy Provision Plan. Groups started thus facing the dilemma of having to enhance coordination and, simultaneously, to proceed with autonomous mobilization initiatives on the nuclear issue. However, some spectacular actions were taken to attract more public attention. In one case, four ecologists interrupted the debates over the program of the new government in parliament by surprise, and after offering flowers to the astonished new prime minister, they unfolded a black canvas depicted with the words «Say No to the Nuclear Power». The four ecologists were later thrown out by the police.

However, the movement was finding it hard to deal with the «ups and downs» of the issue. Only when the government was getting closer to decision-making on the issue, did movement politics seemed to intensify. In this case, every conference addressing nature conservation issues always ended up debating the nuclear issue, and the press was more receptive to «rumours» about «hidden from the public» initiatives of the nuclearists.

In the summer of 1983, a weekly periodical diffused news about the pre-selection of four localities as probable locations of nuclear power plants previewed by the Plan.<sup>3</sup> This once again immediately unleashed petitions, protest actions, local assemblies, and grass roots «anti-nuclear commissions» which were organized by the local governments. However, the debate on the nuclear issue was entering a new stage. It was now dominated by the technical features of the Energy Provision Plan, thus, hardly accessible to the public. The issue was dependent upon deep analysis and investigation held by renown experts. Since the revision of the Energy Provision Plan was on course and the approval by the Parliament would be asked, the impact of either these grass roots protests or ecologist group denouncings about «hidden» moves of nuclearists and energy policy-makers was not enough to make anti-nuclear mobilization go beyond an expectant stand. Only the initiative of the government, which had a wide majority in parliament

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<sup>3</sup> *Ferrel* was not anymore among the pre-selected locations. Actually, it had been discovered that the region was a seismic area. However one of the places included was, curiously, *Miranda do Douro*, a town that had just gotten out of the *Sayago* «nightmare».

and had been formed by the two major parties, could make the issue come to the foreground again.

Meanwhile, the group *Os Amigos da Terra* was offered participation in a wide consultative commission for accompanying the revision of the 1982-version of the National Energy Provision Plan. The commission was still integrated by experts in charge of the plan, representatives of other policy sectors of state administration -- this time including also the environmental policy sector -- representatives of industries, and independent experts. The role of this commission was to analyze economic development and energy consumption scenarios concerning the period covered by the plan.

Actually, the commission constituted an important state arena for debating the plan before it went public. It extended participation of renown independent experts, which were long since opposing the nuclear option. The commission also included groups mobilizing on the nuclear issue which could be viewed as a primary consequence of criticisms held by anti-nuclear mobilizers over the «hidden from the public» style of decision making. But it can also be viewed as an attempt by decision makers to reduce the public impact of the anti-nuclear opposition by dissolving its criticisms within preparatory workings of the plan. In any case, this was an important arena that the anti-nuclear experts and groups could use for deepening divergence that was emerging among state decision makers. Actually, the experts representing other policy sectors of the administration frequently converged with criticisms held by the independent anti-nuclear experts, particularly concerning economic and energy consumption indicators used in scenarios.

Although having abandoned any attempt to launch any kind of mass protest action, which otherwise risked failure before the government's decision on the issue, mobilization of anti-nuclear groups did not restrict, however, participating in state arenas that were finally opened to their representatives. The group '*Os Amigos da Terra*' -- which was the most well-organized and influent of all groups mobilizing on the issue by the early 1980s -- took an important, maybe decisive, mobilization initiative over the nuclear issue in February 1984. By the initiative of the group, a petition over the issue was endorsed by about 400 influential public personages -- including opinion-makers, scientists and professors from several branches of science, artists,

writers, notables from church and juridical milieus, etc. The petition not only demanded for a moratorium on the nuclear program, but it also asked for an independent commission to undertake the revision of the Energy Provision Plan, since decision making processes followed so far by governmental authorities gave no guarantee that the basic democratic rules of decision making were being followed. Given the excellence of notables endorsing the petition, it had great political impact, for it ultimately represented a sharp denouncing of non-democratic practices involving the framework of decision making on the issue as a whole. Besides, it also made clear that the nuclear opposition extended well beyond some «marginal» ecologist and leftist groups, and that the debate on the issue could not be restricted to questions of accuracy of economic and energy supply scenarios. Thus, it made the debate decisively shift from the so far technical, «neutral» mode to a more politically-biased frame.

The nuclear option was finally blocked inside the government itself, essentially due to the opposition of the two successive ministers for the 'quality of life' in the «central block» government (Pimenta et al. 1993: 149; Rosa 1990: 61). Certainly important was also the impact of the anti-nuclear stand performed by the university experts and most opinion makers, all clearly leaning towards a moratorium on the issue. Although, the blockade of the nuclear power production program is often referred to by ecological activists as a «milestone» of the ecological movement in Portugal (Fernandes 1982: 15). The denouncing of all presumable initiatives of the so-called «nuclear lobby» continued to be a special target aimed at by many green activists and organizations for years, but the nuclear power blockade can hardly be considered a success of the environmental movement. The inability of anti-nuclear organizations to lead the opposition to the nuclear issue is evident. Observers agree that nuclear power program was mainly rejected for circumstantial reasons (Lemos 1988: 48). In the years 1982-85, a stringent economic and financial policy program aiming to prepare the economy for the EEC adhesion had been launched, and by the late 1980s, when economic conditions became more favourable, the opportunity for nuclear power had already been lost. The international "mood" towards nuclear power changed after Chernobyl and Portugal followed other long-term options for energy provision, namely the highly polluting coal option and natural gas import.

So there were opportunities for environmental movement organizations to mobilize on an important issue, in that they suddenly entered a new period of contraction and internal dissension over the best way to launch a well-organized ecological movement in Portugal. Actually, the «war» against the Portuguese nuclear program was won without too much organizational efforts by the ecologists, and the Spanish nuclear «siege», which remained restricted to a plant some hundred kilometres from the border, could not mobilize anymore.

#### **4.4. The emergence of grass roots environmental protest and the historical and cultural heritage defence movement**

In the late 1960s tanning plants in *Pernes* -- a region with high concentration of tanning activities -- started abandoning traditional processes and using chemicals in leather production. Since effluents were directly poured into the river, immense blankets of strange foam emerged from the water covering the banks. Stink and diseases caused by pollution begun disturbing the population, whereas fishing and land irrigation was impossible. Most locals still resorted to the traditional household economy as both a way of living and a complement of low industrial wages. Although repression by political police of the late political regime was inexorable, the protesting by the people was heard, and someone even took a bottle of water to be analysed by laboratories in Lisbon. A petition and a memorandum on the issue was addressed to dictator Salazar, and the public TV channel made some motion pictures of the river and the village, even though the broadcasting was blocked by censorship (Cautela 1977: 63-101; Matos 1995: 19 and 21).

Not surprisingly, thus, the *Comissão de Luta Anti-Poluição do Alviela* (CLAPA) (Fighting Commission Against the Pollution of the River Alviela) can be seen as the first grass roots group mobilizing on local environmental issues. Starting the day after the *coup d'état* in 1974, mobilization and protest actions led by CLAPA did not asked for better wages, housing, welfare, land, or the nationalization of industries, as the most part of upheavals of the revolutionary period. The locals fought in this case for halting residual waters flowing from

tanning plants directly into the river, which the population only partially achieved about 20 years later.

Whatever exemplary it may be, this case shows that mobilization over the nuclear energy issue in *Ferrel* was not the first of grass roots protest on environmental issues held in Portugal, nor that environmental protest was totally unknown in the country even before 1974. In some way, the *CLAPA* portrayed the beginning of a long process of local grass roots upheavals mobilizing over environmental issues, which sparsely grew in the mid 1970s at the local level. Provided there were civic or political entrepreneurs within the population apt to lead mobilization actions, a condition that the dawn of democracy facilitated and expanded. Indeed, these local organizations often had activists of radical «far left» groups within their ranks, which remained active throughout the late 1970s. The spreading of these kinds of grass roots protesting meant an opportunity for these groups to punctually block their inexorable declining, which they had gone into after the revolutionary period had passed. On the contrary, grass roots environmental protests rarely got direct mobilization support from ecological groups. Yet, these movements had undoubtedly constituted an important seed-bed of environmental activism and of recruitment for groups emerging at the local level.

Hence, the idea that mobilization on environmental issues were completely absent from post-25 April of 1974 upheavals is not exact. Claims and petitions about environmental issues had even started before April 1974 (Cautela 1977). It is known that a wave of welfare claims, revolutionary occupations of industrial plants and agrarian private estates, and mass movements in support of endless state power struggles swept rapidly across the country after the *coup d'état*. The opportunity was also made for local populations to protest over the consequences of both developers' and authorities' environmental disregard throughout the past few years. Examples came mainly from localities where highly polluting industries had installed. Local populations were first mobilized by so-called inhabitant commissions, and later on by more focused fighting commissions against the pollution of... some place, anywhere. Frequent pressure was exerted on authorities and industry managers for anti-pollution systems, which were technically feasible but very costly. But industries were in a crisis and got used to ignoring environmental impacts of



industrial activity. Also, courts often showed perplexity towards cases and complains for which there was no specific regulation that the industries had to abide by.

These local protests over environmental issues were clearly related to the late boom of industrialization and urbanization starting in the 1960s. However, the immersing of these kinds of local protests into widespread worker movement mobilizations and issues hardly allowed them to be heard or to be defined as ecological and environmental-oriented issue protests. For instance, in the rural south, there were claims and protest by small farmers and locals against forestation with the eucalyptus tree, which by the early 1970s were already invading traditional landscape made of cork and holm oak trees. People suddenly saw the surroundings blocked to customary uses, and their small property unproductive and isolated within a new, strange, desert-like landscape (Cautela 1977: 103-158). But their claims could hardly be heard, submerged by the strength of the land wage worker movement, which was initiating a process of agrarian reform in the south resorting to occupation of large estates with the support of the Communist Party and revolutionary factions of the Army Forces Movement.

Elsewhere, in northern and centre regions, small farmers, fishermen, and parish administrations were also taking initiatives, such as petitions, demonstrations, and legal proceedings, against pollution pouring into the rivers (Cautela 1977: 197-304). However, these actions can hardly be viewed as separate from the participatory and demanding wave mobilizing on a huge scope of citizen rights and welfare issues that swept the country in the first years of the revolution. They were generally promoted by local leaders and members of newly founded left parties, whose constituency grew enormously. With the stabilization and further institutionalization of democracy at the local level, demands and claims started being channeled through, and sometimes solved by, the intermediation of elected local governments. Thereafter, conflicts over environmental issues were very often led by, or had the direct support of, local governments themselves. It is worthwhile to follow some cases of the kind, to depict some characteristics of these grass roots movements on environmental issues.

In the spring of 1982, an important local movement emerged in *Sines*, a small, southern fishing town, where a big chemical and oil industry complex had been installed in the early 1970s. Since then, the town became an early locus of local environmental protest (Cautela 1977:

7-61; and 238-244). This time, however, the case gained new and so far unknown features. Pollution by newly installed plants directly pouring into the sea started affecting fishing. Due to chemical derivatives, fishermen complained of the bad taste of the fish they caught in their nets along the coast. Led by local government representatives they first proposed to temporarily stop industries at stake. They also organized a Fighting Commission Against Pollution, and after some ineffective negotiations with the administration of industries, a strike involving almost all economic activities in town was organized. The media called it the first «green strike» ever. It involved all locals, from fishermen and small traders to restaurants, public offices, schools, and local government administration services. Only the workers of big industries did not strike, although they expressed solidarity with the movement. Actually, since it was not a labour conflict and they had to abide by strike laws, their striking would be considered illegal, entailing consequences for jobs. After fishermen threatened to block the port for unloading oil and raw materials, the movement achieved some success. Industries at stake stopped temporarily until an anti-pollution system, whose functioning was said to have been delayed for one year due to technical reasons, started working properly.

Other important local movements emerged also when the electric company in 1981 decided to pursue a program of coal stations' installation for power production. The program had been elaborated a few years before and had been halted due to expectations over the nuclear power production program. A coal-station was to be built in the surroundings of *Viana do Castelo*, in the northwestern seaside. The region was already affected by some newly installed polluting industries side-by-side with fishing, peasantry, tourism, and shipbuilding. The local's opposition to new pollution was widely unexpected. Mobilized by local leaders, priests, local branches of right and left wing parties, and local governments, fighting commissions and local associations for the protection of the environment were organized. The movement was even joined by other local economic interest groups and folklore associations. This suddenly moved a strong and widely representative local opposition movement forward, in which peasants and fishers demonstrated side-by-side with small traders, high school students, and the local elite.

The government first avoided openly interfering with the affair, but then decided to react. By the time, the government was supported by a right wing coalition and the leader of the 'green'

Monarchic Party occupied the portfolio of the environment and 'quality of life'. Promises to lessen the environmental impact from the plant did not persuade the locals to accept the plant. The electric company would have to change for several times the coal-station location plans due to similar local opposition movements in other potential locations. In *Figueira da Foz* -- a traditional seaside tourist industry pole in the center of the country -- the electric company had to face the opposition of the tourist industry and of the cellulose sector. By either economic or technical reasons both refused to accept the coal station as neighbour. While the company was building new coal burning unities in previously installed plants, another location for the new station was then proposed. However once again, the local protesting and economic interests installed blocked the localization plans. Finally, some municipalities offered to receive the plant in exchange for development infrastructure rewards for the region. The company also accepted to install a couple of technical devices, which environmental authorities imposed, to mitigate air pollution. But it took six years to find a place where to install the coal power station.

By the mid 1980s many other similar issues caused local upheavals. The case of protests due to large open air waste disposal sites started becoming frequent. Actually, in the early to mid 1980s the most important grass roots upheavals, apart those focusing upon unemployment and welfare issues, had environmental and nature preservation issues as a main focus. Adding to cases so far described, the list of grass roots protesting could still grow with cases all over the country, concerning the ecological effects of sand extraction from rivers, or the installation of polluting plants inside municipality areas. The blockade of a cellulose plant in *Salvaterra de Magos* became famous. So it was the case of traditional fishermen from both sides of a northern river, which served as frontier between Portugal and Spain, who later found a way to protest together against pollution loosely spreading into the river (Lopes 1984: 12R). Later on, local protest movements included in action repertoires the collective refusal to vote in either local or parliamentary elections.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The *Comissão de Luta Anti-Poluição do Alviela (CLAPA)* (Fighting Commission Against the Pollution of the River Alviela) -- the first grass roots group ever mobilizing on local level environmental issues -- is said to have pioneered this kind of protest action.

Of course, the dismantling of plants had never been at stake and never asked. Often located in inner rural areas, industries were too important for the economy of the regions, where in general they were the most powerful employers. However, when European environmental regulations slowly began to be enforced after the mid 1980s, environmental authorities' initiatives did not only respond to commitments agreed in negotiations for the adhesion, but also protests coming from grass roots' mobilization.

Although in many cases some local environmental groups emerged from these grass roots moves, the fact is that, for the most part, protest actions spread from local mobilizations without any kind of participation and mobilization efforts by current ecological groups, whose resources, organization style, and activities aimed at pursuing other forms of action. Actually, most activities by environmental groups were then restricted to propaganda and festivals connected with the celebration of special days dedicated to forest, water, and other symbols of environmental protection and nature conservation. For these kinds of actions, they mostly counted upon the support of state agencies for nature conservation or youth issues. Adding to the propaganda, some obstinate and punctual activities of natural site conservation were also the 'raison d'être' of several small, rather unknown groups of «green» activists. Many young people started organizing local associations or environmental nuclei in high schools all over the country, but personal dissent often farther transformed them into smaller nuclei with just a mail box as a headquarters.

In 1981, the National Commission for the Environment counted 75 associations and nuclei of people mobilizing on environmental issues, but only was able to establish regular contact with 25 of them (Fernandes 1982: 14R). Active constituency of these local groups was fluid and the age ranged from 15-25 years old. Although ecological nuclei spread frequently in high schools after Nature Day celebrations, and party adhesives were being progressively replaced by the «yellow sunflower» (*Ibid.*), their continuity was dependent upon young entrepreneurship, whose lack of organizational skills, resources, and experience made 'stop and go' kinds of initiatives. Thus, the lifetime of these groups was too short to make them the basis for further organizational steps. Nevertheless, in the early 1980s they already constituted a large enough ground to make leaders of the most important organizations to think that a new step for

the ecological movement in Portugal should start. What lacked was, in the opinion of one of them, «something at the national level that [could] function as a leading mobilization issue to give unity to the movement, and the nuclear issue could be that thing...» (in Fernandes 1983: 19R).

But it was not. Groups with further mobilization ambitions and mainly located in big cities such as Lisbon and Oporto could not afford to gain trust and support either from local grass roots upheavals' leaders, which very often ended up entering the ranks of mainstream left parties, or from groups that started spreading everywhere at local level, mainly mobilizing over local environmental and heritage protection issues.

Actually, in the margins of the environmental movement, an expanded and influential association movement for the protection of cultural and historical heritage emerged by the late 1970s. Its organizational structures were borne upon a network of autonomous cultural associations, whose mobilization issues and issue interests often included traditional landscape and nature protection side-by-side with archeological, ethnographic, and local history heritage. It was, thus, a movement that had several overlaps and interconnections with the environmental movement organization field, mainly at the local level (Pimenta et al. 1993: 150).

The activity of this associational field was mainly reported by regional and local press, or in regional sections of nationwide media. Associations mobilized mainly on local and regional issues. While state administration often neglected or found it difficult to allocate resources to consistently oppose the deterioration of historical heritage all over the country, associations for cultural, historical, and natural Heritage defence expanded everywhere. They started, thereby, playing an important role as local pressure groups caring about concrete cases of destruction and damages on monuments, landscape, old urban settings, castles, convents, churches, archeological findings, etc. Frequently, they even found the financial or technical means to take direct charge of activities of heritage recovery.

In 1980, they organized a national meeting in view of launching a well-structured movement at the national level, and in April of 1981 they held the second meeting to create a federate organization called *Federação das Associações de Defesa, Estudo e Divulgação do Património Cultural e Natural - FADEPA* ('Federation of the Associations for Defence, Study,

and Diffusion of Cultural and Natural Heritage'). About 300 participants and representatives from 80 associations participated at the meeting, debating heritage preservation laws, historical and urban heritage problems, local tourism and development, territory and urban planning, and preservation of historical urban settings. The movement as a whole put these issues side-by-side with the problems of natural parks, industrial archeology research, sacred arts recovery, and sub-aquatic fauna and flora. Architects, arts and heritage recovery experts, regional press reporters, archeologists, ethnologists, students, representatives of local administrations, ecologists, painters, tourism assistants, high school teachers, and so on, formed an equivocal mix of professional expertise and amateurism, which was the main characteristic of the movement. The meeting received a visit from a representative of the minister for the 'quality of life' -- which was then the governmental member also in charge of the environmental portfolio -- and of the state agency head for cultural and historical heritage care. They both emphasized in their speeches the role of the movement in diffusing aesthetic and moral values of cultural, historical, and natural heritage of the nation, as well as in monitoring and informing local, regional, and national authorities about damages committed in national heritage settings by misinformed local developers.

With such a wide scope of local biased issues and interests, the movement was, thus, a heterogeneous mix of amateurism and expertise, though well-supported by administrations and intellectuals at the local level. The Federation had to face, thereby, an initial and important challenge. Besides playing the role of a public interest group in the field, it had to make sense of the field itself. In a way, these associations constituted a nationwide, watchful network for a broad scope of heritage settings at the local and regional level, which central state agencies found more difficult to grasp. They also represented an emerging movement joined by a growing number of people all over the country that looked at the cultural, historical, and natural heritage as an important dimension of the «life-world». However, in the few next years the Federation started decaying, due to problems of leadership and internal dissent, which unabled any attempt to act as a coordinating organization. Although the movement kept growing at the local level, new national meetings that took place in 1983 and 1986 did not have the same public impact anymore, and the Federation practically stopped functioning. Many of these associations later

joined the environmental movement «industry» in the late 1980s, while others specialized definitely in cultural, historical, and architectural heritage, further integrating the participative institutions created around specific state agencies when this policy sector was finally restructured.

#### **4.5. The 'peak organization' versus 'green party' debate: 'Green' parties, what for?**

Since the very beginning of first anti-nuclear actions a lot of debates and meetings held by the most influential groups and political ecology activists had focused on how to push the movement further in terms unitary action and peak coordination. The issue was frequently under discussion in ecological periodicals, particularly, when elections were close or groups met to try and bring mobilization actions together. For instance, quarrels and ideological debates that showed up during the second anti-nuclear festival at *Miranda do Douro* had been motivated by by many ecologists' and some pioneers' will to form a «European style» 'green party'.<sup>5</sup> But the most influential groups preferred the ongoing autonomy, once differences in ideological orientations prevailing within the movement were deep. Others emphasized that elections were a unique opportunity for propaganda and to use prerogatives allowed by electoral laws, which could be easily conciliated with further ideological debate internal to the movement.

However, in September 1982, environmentalists were surprised by the creation of a self-nominated 'green party' called *Movimento Ecológico Português - Partido "Os Verdes"* (Portuguese Ecological Movement - "The Greens"), whose initiative was said to come from outside the ecologist 'milieu'. Actually, there were no so far known ecological groups or activists among the promoters, while among the 5,000 endorsers necessary to make the party legal at the Supreme Court of Justice there were linked to local anti-pollution «fighting commissions» and, for the most, to several local groups connected to the associations for cultural, historical, and natural heritage defence movement.

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<sup>5</sup> Beginning with the electoral score reached by *die Grünen* in the Hesse *Länder* in Germany, the year of 1982 marks the start of several successes by 'green parties' in Europe.

Since nobody from the ecological groups of Lisbon and Oporto had previously known a thing about the initiative, all wondered which group had enough organizational resources or large constituency to collect 5,000 signatures in «secret». Suspicion fell, naturally, upon political manipulation led by the Communist Party, in that nobody else had enough organizational resources and capability of «creating» a 'green' party in «secret» and ignoring people mobilizing against the nuclear and other ecological issues for almost ten years. Actually, the first public statements of the new 'green' party were very zealous in reproducing some Communist Party stands about the current political crisis, while ignoring either the nuclear or other momentary ecological hit-issues.<sup>6</sup> It was not a surprise, thus, when the 'green' party announced that some of its members would participate in Communist Party coalition lists for the next elections.

According to observers, two groups of people were at the origins of this 'green' party. First, people closely linked to the Communist Party, which provided organizational resources and imposed a strategy of alliance with the Communists. Secondly, ex-activists from «radical left» groups newly converted to ecology, who provided the environmental discourse of the party and its parliamentarians (Pimenta et al. 1993: 138). Nobody from these groups had ever publicly known militancy within the environmental or political ecology organization sector (*Ibid*; Marques 1987: 12).

An overall accepted version of these events is, thus, that the Communist Party pressed some green-oriented activists from its own universe of influence to found a Green Party that would enter the coalition under which the Communists used to present to elections. In this way, Communists were said to have two goals. First, they expected to obtain electoral rewards from the growing of people's concerns with environmental issues. Second, to offer a fashionable alternative, still under the umbrella of the Party, for young people that started abandoning its youth organizations (Fernandes 1983: 19R; Rosa 1990: 61). Since the early 1980s onwards, Portuguese «green» parliamentarians in both national and European parliaments come from this

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<sup>6</sup> Actually, representatives of the new 'green party' did not give convincing explanations to these charges and even admitted some of them.



group, which still integrates the coalition with the Communist Party. Its influence in environmental politics and in public debates over environmental issues has been small and depended mostly on the «charisma» and performance of its parliamentarians.

The election of a representative for the European Parliament in 1987 in the communist lists gave the green party the opportunity to extend relationships to other green organizations at the European level. However, after the renewal of the Communist Party fidelity to orthodoxy of Eastern Europe and Soviet Union Communist Parties, quarrels about political alliances and strategy caused several disagreements. The weakening of the non-communist faction left the party with no hope for autonomy. The European parliamentarian later opted for abandoning the party and to integrate the list of the Socialist Party for the European parliament.

Actually, this was not the first time -- nor would it be the last -- that left wing mainstream parties, in particular the Communist Party and its satellites, tried to take upon the vacant political space that the anti-nuclear and ecologist movements showed unable (or unwilling) to occupy in party politics. Another illustrative case was the anti-nuclear-peace mobilizations of the early 1980s in Portugal. Disputes between the communist and socialist youth organizations over the «ownership» of the issue and control of the movement ended up leaving the ecologists and other anti-nuclearists at the margins of the movement. The control of the Communists over the anti-nuclear-pacifist movement was achieved when a «Give Peace a Chance» Festival against the installation of nuclear weapons was joined by around 5, 000 young people.<sup>7</sup>

Ecological and alternative groups were unable to dispute the «ownership» of the nuclear-peace issue against mainstream party organizations. The case is not unknown in other European countries in which the party system had a strong communist party. Any time an issue with strong mobilization potentials emerged, the ecological movement always proved to be unable to lead political mobilization about it. Even when things were resolved in accordance with the movement's will, as was the case for the nuclear energy issue, ecological groups can hardly be viewed as the decisive actors in making things favourable.

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<sup>7</sup> Lack of space inhibited the inclusion of research data about the anti-nuclear-peace movement that emerged by the early 1980s following the pacifist «mood» sweeping Europe.

In spite of this, the anti-nuclear-peace issue raised the opportunity for two groups to start collaborating and launching initiatives with relevant consequences for the ecological movement. The groups '*Os Amigos da Terra*' and *Projecto Setúbal-Verde* first agreed on autonomously organizing a conference addressing peace and security in Europe. Released in April 1984, the conference counted upon the participation of eminent independent opinion makers that had been mobilizing on the issue, and also of Rudolf Bahro from the German 'Die Grünen'.<sup>8</sup> As a result, they both would call for a wide national meeting of ecological groups to launch a peak coordinating organization.

The fact that environmental issues recovered in the political sphere by such different party formations as the conservative Popular Monarchic Party and the newly 'Green' party formed under the Communist Party umbrella was viewed by many as a serious handicap for movement expansion. Of course, the attempt by the former to play the role of political leader of the environmental movement was unconvincing inside and outside the movement «industry». The latter, beyond being presumably commanded by the Communist Party, was seen by ecological groups as having abusively «stolen» the name and symbols that ecologists found themselves as the legitimate «owners». However, by letting environmental issues and ecological ideals to be disputed by party cleavages, ecologists were risking deprivation of their role and of falling inexorably into a political ghetto similar to the one the radical «left» had fallen into after the stabilization of democracy in the late 1970s.

There were many ecologists cherishing the idea that adding the ideological consistency of «scientists» to the political and organizational skills of former far-left militants would make the perfect venture upon which to build a «truly» green party. Others had more realistic goals and betted upon arrangements involving distinct, well-respected pioneers. In the summer of 1981 the idea of presenting a 'green' candidate for the elections of 1982 was debated in an informal meeting. The idea was agreed on by remarkable pioneers of environmentalism and anti-nuclearism. A commission had even been set out to start mobilizing organizational resources,

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<sup>8</sup> The Conference also provided the opportunity to rise the conscientious objectors issue, which some youth groups and *Os Amigos da Terra* were since a time mobilizing on.

but once again inhibitions in entering politics and in having to leave some groups out of the initiative had prevailed (Fernandes 1982: p. 15R).

Later on, some groups met again to create a coordinating peak organization for the movement. This time they agreed, at least, on a coordinating commission in charge of preparing a big national meeting of groups, although only four of the eleven groups participating had explicitly committed to collaborate with the initiative. The charges of organizing the meeting were ascribed to '*Os Amigos da Terra*' and *Projecto Setúbal-Verde* (Fernandes 1983: 19R).

At the first national meeting of ecologists, representatives of the German 'Die Grünen' and of the Rainbow group of the European Parliament had even been invited. Around 50 ecologists and anti-nuclearists participated, but only 16 groups were formally represented. It is worthwhile to follow the words of the organizers' document calling for the meeting, in order to acknowledge both the mistrusting climate among groups and the care put by the organizers in «avoiding misinterpretations» over their calling for the meeting:

*«The meeting is aimed at making organizations and Portuguese ecological militants in general to know each other better. At this stage, there is no way at all to definitely decide upon any kinds of either strategic or programmatic principles, but rather to discuss, within a climate of fraternity and transparency, about plans, ideas, and doubts, aiming to further achieve unity of action in the near future under a common peak organizational structure (will it be either a federation or a political association). Beyond discussing and clarifying positions, the maximum goal for this meeting is the election of a Coordinating Commission, whose mandate is limited to the period between the first and second meetings of Portuguese ecologists. The main task of this Coordinating Commission will be the enhancing of information flows among participants. It will not have any executive power, and it can not undertake in any case public statements about political issues, exception made for decisions that get unanimity of all groups.»*  
(Translated from the original in Portuguese.)

The meeting initiated with a debate on some aspects of the international ecological movement with visitors from abroad, and the models of political participation defended by both the Monarchic Party and the newly formed *Partido "Os Verdes"*, which had also been invited.

But the main point was the peak organization model for the association movement. Six slightly different proposals were presented and further discussed, but a consensus leaning to the constitution of a federation was achieved, and the political party model widely refused. The Coordinating Commission renewed its mandate for carrying out preparatory tasks concerning the organizational structure and legal aspects of the federation to be formed, and to prepare the second meeting. It was purposefully held in March of 1985 to debate the details of, and finally approve, the structure and internal rule of the peak federation.

Actually, many groups and activists were favourable to the creation of a peak organization to unify the movement. But the moment lacked an important, consensus-making issue that might allow to return to the climate of collaboration and unity that the movement had known in first demonstrations against the nuclear power station in *Ferrel* (Fernandes 1983: 19R). The ups and downs of the nuclear issue in political and public agendas caused by hesitation of state actors about the issue contributed to the dispersal of groups, blocking the unity of action and mutual collaboration that many ecologists expected. The anti-nuclear demonstrations against the installation of Spanish nuclear-power stations near the border did not have the same public and political impact, nor enhancing effects upon the movement.

The opposition to the creation of a 'green party' was also justified by many on the lack of adhesion by the public to environmental values, which they argued was due to low levels of environmental deterioration, since Portugal had not reached the excesses found in France and Germany (Fernandes 1983: 19R). There were also fears that political party militancy under the 'green' label would have the same fate experienced by most «radical left» groups, which after an initial boom ended up falling into a small ghetto.

However, many new activists were distancing themselves from radical political ecology, while others, who first came to the movement in fights against local level pollution issues, or joined local historical and cultural heritage defence groups, seemed to be too much involved in local level activities to think of their small, but successful, initiatives as part of a wider movement. In general, a huge part of the movement shared a negative view of militancy in formal political organizations, which reflected fears to enter any kind of peak organization structure (Fernandes 1983: 19R).

Observers characterized the organizational field of the environmental movement of that time as being «small and closed onto itself». Personal quarrels and sectarianism were more frequent than deep divergence on issues, interests, and goals. Most small, local nuclei were fluid and short-lived. Therefore, only groups particularly interested in politically relevant issues, as the nuclear power issue, defended the formation of a party. Others, such as the group '*Os Amigos da Terra*', though sharing the priority given to mobilizing on the nuclear power issue, preferred to give time for ideas, organization structures, and organizational practices to develop, in order to facilitate the inclusion of all groups at the grass roots level (*Ibid.*).

The *Associação Portuguesa de Ecologistas - Os Amigos da Terra* (Portuguese Association of Ecologists - The Friends of the Earth) was founded in 1978 as an attempt to replace the *Movimento Ecológico Português*, whose regular activity had progressively declined. Its formal links to a credible international organization -- the group was a member of Federation of the Friends of the Earth International -- gave the group further legitimacy and credibility, which attracted constituency and contributors, and fostered recognition and acceptance of the groups within the ecological 'milieu, public-opinion, and state actors. Although not explicitly ambitious to represent the whole Portuguese ecological movement, international connections allowed the group to often play this role at the international level.

The group first gathered people coming from «radical left» militancy. They, thus, shared similar cultural references and a strong attraction to some trends of political ecology expanded in many branches of the ecological movement that was sweeping across Europe in the late 1970s. The group clearly rejected the classical party top-bottom style of organization, giving primacy to collective debating and consensus making. Nevertheless, by the mid 1980s, most founders had already abandoned the organization (Lopes 1984: 14R). In spite of this, the group became the most influential throughout the early to mid 1980s in Portugal. Mobilization activities were mainly concentrated in propaganda, participation in public debates, and street protest actions. Focusing on the fundamental principles of non-violence, pacifism, and the political ecology critique of development and industrialism, the group often achieved mobilization beyond its active constituency. The group was successful in making use of institutional political pressure as a means of action, either towards state administration or conventional political parties. Apart

from mobilizing on disarmament and the dismantling of nuclear weapons, the group was very active with the nuclear power issue. The group's orientation about the nuclear power stressed also further political implications of the issue for the future of democracy, such as centralization of decision making which complex security systems tended to promote. Nonetheless, the most distinct feature of this group as compared with other current organizations of the Portuguese environmental movement of the period was its attention to issues raised worldwide by the international environmental movement. Furthermore, the group developed links to several branches of the international ecological movement, not only through the Friends of the Earth International and the European Environmental Bureau, but also by direct contacts with other local groups in many European nations. Therefore, members of the group frequently were seen as the unique representatives of the Portuguese ecological movement in many international meetings, conferences, and conventions, either as observers or as full participants.<sup>9</sup>

It was, absolutely, one of the most important groups either in terms of constituency or of active membership. In the mid 1980s it had delegations in the north and the islands, and claimed to have around 11,000 members. Its paramount acting over nationwide issues, its closeness to the political and press 'milieus' of Lisbon, and its vocation and skills to make use of public issue arenas gave the group public visibility and real influence both external and internal to the movement. Thus, the leading role of this group within the movement and as organizer of the national ecologist meetings was highly justified.

The second national meeting of Portuguese ecologists was finally held in the spring of 1985. Since a consensus over the creation of a federation had been achieved the last time, it was expected that debates would focus predominantly on the structure, scope of action, and internal rule of the peak organization. Unfortunately, it would not know the same peaceful and consensus-making climate of the first meeting. Participation this time was much broader concerning both organizations and individual participants, thus making conditions to obtain consensus and agreements more difficult. In the end, the debate regressed to the point of departure.

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<sup>9</sup> In November 1983, the group organized the Twelfth International Meeting of the Federation Friends of the Earth International, which was held in Portugal..

The generic idea of a federation was still the most preferred solution, but there were many doubts about timing, methods, organizational structure, internal rule, membership criteria, and so on. Yet, four of the eight proposals presented at the meeting for discussion explicitly stressed the will of «following the example of the German green-mates». The meeting risked, thus, to end up inconclusive.

A group of participants preferred to first elect a commission in charge of preparatory tasks and developing a network of permanent contacts among associations before calling for a new meeting the next year. They argued for the need to deepen mutual understanding and interchanges, aiming at surpassing dissension that was obstructing the foundation of a peak organization on a wide consensus basis. In particular, they regretted the non-participation of many local and issue-oriented groups, which they feared would be left out of the peak organizational structure of the movement.

On the contrary, other participants viewed the meeting as an opportunity to launch a «political movement» in the short term, which they viewed as an urgent need. Their proposal was to immediately present one of the pioneers as eco-candidate in the presidential election by the fall of the 1985. However, they were seen by part of the assembly as «outsiders» and «newcomers». The proponents of a «political movement» were mostly ex-militants of «radical left» groups, which caused suspicion about their joining the ecological movement. Moreover, they had not participated in the previous meeting, and would be blamed for having aggravated the conflictive climate prevailing over this one.

Finally, there were those trying to stay in the middle. Considering that the federation model had already received wide consensus in previous meetings, the approval of a minimal organizational structure and of an internal rule for the federation was seen as the only way to furthering unity among associations, provided a strict internal rule for maintaining the autonomy of groups was accepted. However, the proposal was blamed by others as entailing a bureaucratic way out of the movement crisis.

Neither of these trends managed to be convincing, and the meeting ended without any final decision (Lemos 1988: 48). There was too much divergence over interests and goals between conservationists, political ecologists, alternatives, and «new comers», the latter having

resorted to their experience and organizational skills obtained in radical left militancy to gain predominance in debates. Furthermore, the two organizational models proposed at the meeting -- party or federation -- showed highly irreconcilable. Nevertheless, it was said that organizations came to know each other better, so that a final document reflecting general, shared points of view was issued (Pimenta et al. 1993: 149; and Lemos 1988: 49). But the federation was not founded, and a commission was not elected to go ahead with next organizational tasks. Only a manifesto proposed by one of the pioneers and curiously entitled «Minimal Principles for a Maximum Agreement» achieved to cross over the pervasive polemical climate of the assembly and get some consensus. The document focused on generic ideas and principals about economic development, environmental deterioration, world peace, and disarmament, which all seemed to share.

These national meetings of ecologists had been a rare opportunity to confront contrasting views about organizational frames and strategy for the movement. The problem was how to make conscientious objectors, non-violence followers, conservationists, anti-nuclearists, radical ecologists, eco-pacifists, esperantists, radical leftists, anarchists, monarchists and 'green' communists to agree about «minimal principles» for a peak organization. Participants gave to themselves and external observers a faithful portrait of the movement.

The idea of a federation or of a similar organizational model was not new, and there had been debates about it since the late 1970s (Lopes 1984: 13R, and *A Urtiga*, no. 3, 1978). Some would prefer to call it a league of citizens, others talked about a confederation. In the meeting itself, some groups even had advanced proposals addressing the principles of the fundamental rule of the federation. This organizational structure was thought to be extremely decentralized and guarantee the autonomy of every group as a strict principle. Affiliation might be collective, though individual members could be admitted in exceptional cases, and the meeting of all member groups should be the ultimate instance of decision making.

Actually, the formula would overcome the problem of group inclusion and autonomy, but seemed also to avoid facing the difficult obstacle of a minimum ideological agreement to serve as programatic platform, which the launching of a green party or other kind of politically biased peak organization would have to establish. Many had the fear that any kind of politically biased



organization, due to demanding efforts needed to enter party politics fights, would destroy or leave behind other important basic, pedagogic, and issue-mobilization tasks that, in the last few years, were being carried out by local and regional associations. Cleavages between goals and practices of more conservation-oriented groups and ideological orientations and activities of more radical, political ecology-oriented trends seemed to be the dividing standpoints affecting organizations that formed the bulk of the movement. Yet, other kinds of prejudices were blocking people and groups from agreeing on a peak organization model for the movement. Because of its compelling and sharp-witted expressiveness, it is worthwhile to transcribe the following passage on this topic written in 1978 by a distinguished ecologist and editor:

*«Some have fear that the ecological movement will be not revolutionary enough, others, not conservative enough. Some, that it will not express any kind of positive concern, while others would like to eliminate its mystic excrescences. There are those thinking that it will be necessary to put aside any kind of lyricism and subjectivism, while others to abandon any kind of link with science and rational thought. Some fear the neighbourhood of anarchists, others would rather excommunicate the monarchists. Some do not like to be confused with the eco-folklore of hippies, alternatives, and the likes, while others look at the tie and the briefcase of the academic as a potential threat. There are many who do not even admit to be invited for a brown rice meal, while others see in beefsteak an impediment to being ecologist. Some would like it to be more on the left, others more on the right...»* (translated from Portuguese in Lopes 1984:13R).

Actually the euphoria and unity in protest actions achieved in January 1978 at the festival «For Life Against the Nuclear» were being replaced by the «dictatorship of the idea», (*Ibid.*) every group or individual activist claiming to have found the best, hardest, and purest ideas over how to save the world. But apart from this, it can be said that there were two parallel, alternative strategies to enhancing coordination of environmental collective action in Portugal. Someone accurately named them the associational strategy and the political strategy (Franco 1984: p. 8).

The first aimed to predominantly intervene at the social and cultural level, bearing upon the creation and development of a strong associational field able to exert pressure upon the sphere of the state from outside the political field. Distancing from direct participation within the

political sphere, and resorting either to public sphere arenas or participatory institutions opened by the state, this strategy was, however, too dependent on resilient factors and features of the political opportunity structure, such as: (1) The weak dynamics of the public sphere and of civil society; (2) the centralism of state structures and self-sufficiency of state policy and decision making; (3) the lack of openness of political parties to autonomous citizen action groups; (4) and, not least, the lack of a political public sphere proper for the participation of autonomous collective actors in environmental politics at the local, regional, and national level.

The other strategy, on the contrary, saw intermediation over environmental issues as an obstacle. The basic assumption of this strategy was that, in order to strengthen the environmental point of view at both the national and local level of policy-making and environmental politics, autonomous, direct political action was necessary. This ultimately led to the traditional political party formula. Actually, the political system was so much centered upon state action and party politics that it made many activists think that attention to environmental issues by policy makers and state actors could only be achieved if a wide political movement mobilizing on these issues could be launched. Moreover, it seemed to be the only way available for taking opportunities offered by political structures and the political system. Mainly, it would take advantage of electoral campaigning in enlarging adhesion and support of the public to the environmental movement. Yet, it would better fit with the functioning of the political system in Portugal, which privileged political party participation at the national level via the parliament in legislative processes, and at the local level through representation in local governments.

The story of this twofold strategy cleavage of the Portuguese environmental movement is certainly not original. Only their features may be related to particularities of the structure of political opportunities. In some way it also had to do with age cleavages. Those that were too young to have participated in struggles against the dictatorship or in post-coup upheavals preferred to keep going ahead with basic grass roots associational work, while distrusting any attempt to define their activity as political action. Thereby, they were very distant from older activists, who felt more at ease in direct political action and further justified their will either with the urgency of environmental policy issues -- «before it is too late» -- or with the examples of other nations' movements -- or the excitement over the German case.

Of course none of these strategic lines corresponded to any coherent ideological or organizational block, as difficulties to agree upon a coordinating peak organizational formula for the association field proved. Moreover, there were also intermediate possibilities of converging the two seemingly parallel strategies. Some activists thought that the two strategies were different but not necessarily contradictory, and that they could very well converge into a third alternative, by forming a non-party political movement similar to those emerging every five years in Portuguese politics in support of candidates for the presidential elections (Franco 1984).

The idea of launching such a movement often emerged when it was time for presidential elections. Actually, the Portuguese political system allowed non-party candidates to run in the elections in only two cases: in elections for the president of the republic, and at the local level for parish district administrations. Although at the local level political parties always blocked in practice the emerging of independent candidates, the formula functioned very well and was thoroughly followed by conventional parties in presidential elections. Of course, there were no means for a candidate to be elected without the active support of at least one of the two major parties. But winning elections was not at all the goal of ecologists, and an «intermediate political movement» of the kind did not have to necessarily commit groups and associations with a formal political organization. Choosing the candidate among the pioneers available, he could be supported by a promoting commission formed by renown people, whose sympathy and interest in ecology and environmental protection should leave no doubts. The promoting commission did not have to constitute inevitably on the basis of any kind of assembly, or be voted by groups and associations, but rather had to be formed by the initiative of independent citizens as such. Groups and associations did not have to adhere formally to the movement, whose joining was free to everyone agreeing with the principles promoted by the candidate. Although there were certainly many activists willing to see the movement expand this way, such a movement never emerged.

## Conclusion of Part II

Two main political contextual factors had decisive influence upon the political opportunity structure for the rise of environmentalism as a social movement in this period: the post-coup transition to democracy, and the stabilization of the new political regime drawing on the principles of parliamentary, representative, liberal democracy.

The *revolutionary* climate of the transition to democracy period seems to have not been very auspicious for the development of environmentalism as an organizational form of *new issue* politics. After a half century of backwardness and authoritarian rule it was not easy to compete with basic welfare, economic, and political citizenship issues in seeking for the attention of the public and of leading political actors. The widely unorganized and disconnected forms of environmental collective action and the climate of political and ideological dissension that extended from the *radical left* to *new issue* politics did not facilitate the search for an organizational project that could give support to building the movement collective identity.

This context made the ecological critique to confine to the nuclear issue. In this sense, it can be said that the environmental movement of the first period in Portugal gained some relief more as a resonance of the anti-nuclear wave that swept across advanced industrial democratic nations by the late 1970's, than as a social movement able to give organizational and ideological support to the emerging forms of grass roots protests over environmental issues, which spontaneously and mostly independent of groups' action started springing out at the local level. In practice, the inability of groups to provide a political ecology frame to grass roots protests over environmental issues, led groups to isolation and to forms of mainly internal ideological debating similar to those of *new left* groupings on the ebb of the post-coup revolutionary period.

Moreover, the resolution of the nuclear power issue can hardly be seen as an achievement of the environmental movement, as it is often referred to by the guardians of the movement's history. Other powerful and highly influent actors emerged defending a non-nuclear solution for energy provision and also actively (and decisively) participated in mobilizations over the issue. This was the case of an active group of university experts on energy. Still, influent leading

members of the conventinal parties and an elite of intellectuals and media opinion-makers played a decisive role in the resolution of the issue. In consequence, the falling down of the nuclear issue in public and political agendas by the mid 1980s was followed by the returning of environmental groups to their ghetto within the small and mainly culture-oriented field of *new issue* and *new left* politics.

Another question has to do with the problem of the hegemony and supremacy of the state over civil society concerning the structure of an emerging field of environmental politics. It has been said by many local authors that the stabilization of the political system, and the re-establishing of state authority and legitimacy as drawing upon constitutional and electoral means was, in a certain way, made «against» civil society. That is, it asked for blocking civil society group initiative, whose interference in conventional politics throughout the post-coup period often blocked state action in many domains. In other words, the stabilization of the political regime and of the democratic rule borne upon the principles of liberal, parliamentary, representative democracy was at some extent made against participative claims of grass roots groupings and wide social protest, which was led essentially by the working class movement under the auspices, and often the leadership, of military leaders that staged the coup, the communists, and other non-parliamentary radical left groups.

In particular, the strengthening of authority and of the role of the state restored state centralism, autonomy, and self-sufficiency of policy and decision making by state actors, which had further effects into the polity and the shape of the environmental politics field. For instance, this is why the long lasting stay of the «green» monarchists in charge of the environmental portfolio in post-coup successive governments had left nothing more than some -- though virtually important -- bills for nature protection and territory planning that, ultimately, were hardly implemented or applied afterwards. The participation of collective actors from several sectors of civil society mobilizing on environmental issues had never been envisaged in initiatives aiming at building a policy domain for the environmental sector. The building of an environmental policy sector and respective decision-making structures virtually disregarded the potentials of political support deriving from groups outside the state sphere. They had practically been ignored in the process of constructing the new policy field of the environment.

In any case, the ideological gap between the traditionalist, conservationist and conservative approach to environmental policy issues of the monarchists, and the radical political ecology view and «new left» rhetoric that predominated in groups did not favour the development of a collaborative climate that could lead to institutional participation of groups in policy-making. Moreover, «green» monarchists lacked political strength deriving from electoral scores to prioritize environmental policy issues within state action. It can, thus, be said that, in spite of their genuine efforts, the monarchists played a misleading role as carriers of environmentalism inside the administration.

Another question is why state actors of the powerful energy planning sector did not achieve to impose the nuclear power solution in face of a weakly organized, though convincing, discourse-oriented action that strongly mobilized public opinion? It is true that the anti-nuclear opposition took advantage from cleavages among state actors, the government, and mainstream, conventional parties over the issue. However, the contention over the legitimacy of decision-making processes centered on the mechanisms of representative democracy and administrative technocracy alone, as portrayed by the nuclear power issue, may be explained from a twofold perspective. First of all, it can be seen as a following up of the transition-to-democracy period politics, in which non-institutional forms of influencing decision making had become a means of political action, benefiting from the lack of stabilization, governability, legitimacy, and authority of state power. On the other hand, the institutionalization of democracy was gradually giving rise to new institutional forms of public debating and communicative action. Knowledge resources and argumentation means, which most sectors of the anti-nuclear opposition were very well equipped with, started gaining more importance than political and ideological convictions in influencing policy decision making. In this context, state actors did not manage to overcome the growing anti-nuclearism of public opinion emerging from public debates over the nuclear power program previewed by the National Energy Provision Plan.

Another issue worthwhile of discussion is the group's attraction to form a 'green party'. This organizational alternative seems to have been more of an escapade than really an organizational alternative for the movement in search for collective identity and mobilization resources. The issue originated splits internal to the movement, which otherwise were expected

to happen for other reasons too. Actually, after anti-nuclear mobilizations, environmentalism attracted contradictory segments of young people and *new issue* militancy in search for organizational means that could afford to further political and civic participation. On the one hand, the anti-industrialism of the ecological discourse and its critique of capitalistic growth at the expense of natural resources depletion made it very attractive to militancy abandoning *radical left* groups when the revolutionary period faded away. On the other, environmentalism was also emerging as a field of public participation for youngsters in search for an alternative to the «politics as usual» of *radical left* groups and of mainstream parties' youth organizations. Thus, two opposed and contradictory views of politics and ecology joined the movement by the early to mid 1980s. Although risking some reductionism, one may say that the former saw ecology as the continuity of the *radical left* anti-capitalistic project, while the latter thought it was essentially an apolitical, *moral crusade* and drew upon forms of apolitical association as organizational project. One view assumed the ecological ghetto as an emancipatory vanguard, which in some way recovered the Leninist organizational model prevailing so far in *radical left* politics. The other drew upon the potentials for resistance and withdrawal of the ecological discourse, and aimed not at conquering a new political territory but at expanding the new *culture of nature* as a social practice. The former was willing to take advantage of the upsurge of new political opportunities opened by the stabilization of democracy -- in particular, of facilities and resources for electoral campaigning, propaganda, and political participation allowed by the political system to party politics action; the latter gave credit to communicative action and apprenticeship as a means for cultural and value change, and saw environmentalism as a gradual social learning process of *internalizing nature into culture*.

However, it is true that, by lack of organizational resources and by permanent internal splits environmental groups found it hard to emerge from their own ghettoized, propaganda and conservation activities. In a certain way, the nuclear power issue was a unique opportunity for the movement to emerge within the political scene as a political movement. Actually, many national branches of the environmental movement abroad resorted to the anti-nuclear battles to further a well-organized and influential political movement capable of profiting from political opportunities opened by respective national political structures and conjunctures. In the

Portuguese case, on the contrary, it was more the swan-song of political ecology than a new impulse for the movement.

In the end, only the effects of the adhesion to the EEC would finally contribute decisively to furthering an environmental policy sector, which in the mid to late 1980s started envisaging the participation of the citizenry and of environmental groups in policy-making processes. Before this, the gradual and smooth 'greening' of mainstream, conventional parliamentary parties in attention to the environmental impacts of the economic recovering from recession was not enough to stop the progressive deterioration of the nation's environmental performance.



## **PART III**

### **Association Actors, Institutional Contexts, and Communication Processes of Environmental Issues in Portugal: The Institutionalization of Environmental Politics**

Part III focus on the upsurge of new political opportunities for environmental collective action the late 1980s onwards. In particular, the initiatives by the state in institutionalizing environmental issue arenas and setting up the environmental field as a policy sector are analyzed. The analyses emphasizes the making of a public space on environmental issues as a means available to movement associations, whose mobilization efforts aimed at hindering the environmental impact of development policy initiatives.

This part begins with a chapter focusing on events, conflicts, and issue debates occurring during the first years after the adhesion to the EEC in the fall of 1986. The late 1980s may be described as a «transition period» between the rise and institutionalization of environmentalism in Portugal both at the level of the state and the movement. The adhesion to the EEC was not only a turning point towards the institutionalization process at the state level, but it also entailed deep changes in the composition, organizational profile, and action strategy of the movement. An insitutional framework of participation allowed associations to get the status of autonomous «public interest» groups and to receive support from the state. A climate of collaboration, though often conflictive, between state actors of the environmental policy domain and environmental groups was established in the period. Environmental associations started playing a major role in increasing public communication over environmental issues, and new dynamics were introduced in relationships between the state and autonomous organizations of environmental politics in Portugal, which sought to be different from the one prevailing so far.

The early 1990's is, thus, the closing of a cycle initiated with the launching of the environmental sector as a policy domain and by the institutionalization of movement actors in environmental policy-making.

## **Chapter 5. - Environmental Politics and Issues after the EEC Adhesion: The Late 1980s**

### **5.1. Developing an environmental policy sector**

After the stabilization of the political regime and of the economic system, the recovering from the economic and financial crisis, and the adhesion to the EEC started a period of governmental stability and economic development. The favourable economic conjuncture and the financial aid from the EEC highlighted the economic and industrial growth, and extensive development of local and regional infrastructures in the late 1980s. It allowed also for the environmental policy sector to finally be given some relief within the politico-administrative system and to be recognized as an important area of state action.

When the Adhesion Treaty to the EEC was signed in June 1985 by a dismissed «central-block» government, the nation was once again waiting for parliamentary elections, after the new leader of the Social-Democratic Party had broken off the coalition with the Socialists. The elections of the autumn of 1985 gave him a relative majority in parliament, and he formed a new cabinet. Some changes were introduced in the structure of the government. The ministries of the 'quality of life' and of public works were extinguished, but a super-ministry of territory planning and administration was created with extended competence over infrastructure building and regional development policies. This super-ministry was also responsible for the administration of the most part of the funds made available by the EEC for infrastructure modernization and regional development.

Due to its integration into this super-ministry, the state secretary for the environment and natural resources also gained a new status inside the government. Its competence was enlarged to many new domains of territory planning, water resources, forestry, and natural parks and reserves, which in spite of their obvious environmental implications, were so far dispersed among other ministries and state secretaries.

For the environmental portfolio, a young engineer and former occupant of the post was called. Carlos Pimenta had before resigned from the post in the first «central block» government for not having been given real power to carry out changes he thought the environmental policy sector needed. He was now offered the conditions to initiate a process of modernization and renewal of this policy sector both at the legislative level and in the administrative organizational structure.

The new state secretary for the environment and natural resources was recruited from an active group of young experts in energy, environment, and territory planning, which had emerged in the early 1980s within the Social Democratic Party. He had first collaborated with a former minister of the 'quality of life' in opposing the nuclear-power station project. When holding the portfolio of the environment and natural resources in the «central block» government, he had promoted the approval of a postponed bill creating a national ecological reserve. This was an important legislative tool to halt the invasion of interesting environmental and nature sites by tourist and housing industries at the seaside, and of other natural sites all over the territory by fast-growing afforestation projects. He also had been able to oppose the powerful cellulose industry sector, whose lobby had strong support inside his own party and the government. Environmental issues concerning both up and downstream features of the industry, which were so far tolerated by the administration, started to become targets of the environmental sector policy action. The new state secretary had then initiated a global revision of environmental legislation aiming, among other goals, to prevent damages in ecological sites and protected areas, and to make municipalities commit to management of natural reserves and river basins. He had also launched a wide campaign for demolishing clandestine summer houses in natural reserves and protected areas by the sea and mountains, which forced him to face hostility of local upheavals of long-time illegal house owners.

Furthermore, the elaboration of a basic law for the environment received then a decisive impulse. This law was important in several aspects. It included legal innovations already enforced in most advanced nations -- for instance, the «polluter pays» principle -- and would have a considerable impact in Portuguese society by the mid 1980s. Besides being an important tool for state action in the field, it increased environmental collective action and enhanced a

profound change in the awareness of the public about environmental and nature protection issues. Thus, the nomination of Carlos Pimenta for the portfolio of environment and natural resources raised high expectations, and would have a long lasting impact in administration structures and state action of the environmental policy domain.

Actually, the agreement with the EEC in the environmental field was very demanding, particularly in what concerned the control of environmental effects of infrastructure building and industrial modernization in which funds of the EEC were to be invested. An assertive and dynamic state action in the environmental policy sector was necessary in order, firstly, to respect commitments with the EC in the environmental field and, second, to unlock barriers long since installed both inside state administration and in the economic sector concerning environmental impacts of development and modernization.

Indeed, having found that many important obstacles for state action in the environmental domain came from the state administration itself, an important though less visible goal of the new state secretary was the restructuration of state administration services dealing with environmental policy issues. Dissemination of competence on relevant areas among different administration and technical services of several ministries and state secretaries blocked any will to really launch an environmental policy domain. Furthermore, since competence of the environmental administrative sector was in many cases merely consultative and, for the most, hardly followed by other policy sectors, the aim was also to promote environmental criteria in policy and decision making in all policy sectors.

This made the new state secretary for the environment and natural resources to play the awkward role of a sort of «environmental opposition» inside the government itself. Drawing upon its own political influence and prestige inside the government and the party, as well as within the environmental association 'milieu', he made state administration a decisive arena of environmental politics, and environmental movement associations an important ally for this strategy. The moderate features of a new «wave» of emerging environmental associations fit this purpose. Associations represented a genuine and original emanation of civil society in which self-interest and political party goals were absent by definition.

In the end, the attempt was to pursue policy orientations that ultimately were dictated by a far reaching accepted and so far unquestionable national endeavour. The urge to make the nation participate of more rich and advanced European democracies' «club» became the new identity project of the nation after the definitive loss of colonial empire in the mid 1970s. This gave further legitimacy and consensus to pursue more compelling state action in the environmental domain. Besides, opposition parties were mostly «unprepared» to make the environmental domain a focus of opposition to the government, so as the widely recognized independence of most environmental associations helped to define this policy domain as a non-party politics field.

This strategy and other aspects of the new state secretary political and policy action marked for years the patterns and configuration of environmental politics in Portugal. It further exerted considerable impact upon the environmental movement career itself. Finally, it also left a mark on the environmental policy sector state administration as a whole. Nevertheless, the replacing of the state secretary in the late 1980s can be seen as the first flop of this strategy and a backward move by the government, when policy initiatives in the environmental domain started becoming very demanding (and costly) in face of the deficit of infrastructural, regional development, and economic modernization affecting the nation.

Before this, however, the year of 1986 saw the active state secretary of the environment and natural resources to re-start things, with a renewed *élan* and further political support, from the point where he left them when he dropped out of the post in the «central block» cabinet a few earlier.

Politically, the year of 1986 began with the electoral campaign for the presidency of the republic. For the first time after democracy had been re-established in April 1974, a non-military candidate was elected. The winner was the former prime minister, who had just lost parliamentary elections as leader of the Socialist Party. The political movement backing the candidate, which actively mobilized a lot of academics and intellectuals from several fields, promoted then a wide political debate over the nation's modernizing in view of joining the EEC. Besides giving a broader political *élan* to elect the candidate from the socialist area after he lost parliamentary elections the previous year, the debate aimed also at finding a more extensive, less

ideological, and non-economicist political approach to «the future of the country as a full-fledged European nation». Aiming to reach an electoral mass larger than the Socialist Party electoral support -- which was, of course, backing the candidate -- the movement intended to achieve an alternative view over the future of the nation in face of political proposals of the centre-right party that had recently won parliamentary elections and formed the government. Debates covered a wide range of fields, from education and urbanism to industry and agriculture, but it practically ignored the area of environmental protection.

Although not genuinely coming from the Socialist Party itself, this fact is worthwhile to retain by its exemplary drift. The Socialist opposition was still strong enough to elect its candidate as president of the republic. However, in what concerned further efforts to exert pressure and influence policy-making orientations to enhance the performance of the country as an European nation, it seemed not to care about the environmental field, at least as much as it cared for industry, agriculture, educational system, and other policy sectors.

This fact was also evident in other initiatives carried out by the Socialists. For instance, in order to make militants and sympathizers from the academic and cultural fields participate in reflections over development and modernization of the country from a left wing point of view, a convention was held in the end of 1986. However, the so called *Convenção da Esquerda Democrática* (Convention of the Democratic Left) was severely criticized by militants of both the Socialist Party Youth Organization and ecological groups as it had completely ignored nature and environment protection issues.

Thus, the field of environmental politics seemed to be completely in the hands of the environmental state administration under the leadership of the new state secretary. The Socialist Party left right wing parties and the Government to be rewarded by their tackling of environmental policy issues. Most environmental organizations proceeded with their small activities of nature conservation in expectation of initiatives by the new state secretary. The 'green' monarchist leader was in the meantime concentrating his 'crusade' upon being councilor of the administration of Lisbon. The *élan* of the state secretary seemed to have taken opposition parties -- particularly the Socialist Party -- by surprise.

The media collaborated by giving public visibility to policy-making initiatives of the state secretary. A wide network for monitoring the quality of the air in urban and industrial poles was announced. The creation of more protected landscape areas and sites gradually increased the territory covered by a special regime of protection and conservation. New legislation, such as bills regulating the production and marketing of chemicals and toxic products, or about noise and industrial risks whose lack was becoming very notorious, were finally discussed for approval with «social partners», environmental groups included.

The mobilization of local administrations and of civil society to collaborate with the state for nature protection and anti-pollution projects, for which EC funds were available, was one of state secretary main policy goals. This endeavour aimed also at overpassing structural blockades internal to the state affecting the environmental policy sector. He wanted things to be pushed from outside the state sphere. Therefore, private enterprises, local administrations, and even environmental groups were encouraged to develop anti-pollution and nature conservation projects to be funded by Brussels.

Some environmental groups began to be involved in direct nature protection activities at the local and regional level, thereby mobilizing local public and private entities in developing projects that had conservation of species and preservation of natural sites or the landscape as a main focus. This enormously increased the activities of environmental groups by the mid to late 1980s, although funds available were still too scarce to be shared by all.

On the other hand, new legislation was also progressively promoting the expansion of the environmental field as a new market for private economy. New «environmental friendly» products and technologies, and the use of recycled raw materials was promoted. The new state secretary also initiated the environmental policy sector in dealing with energy issues, which was truly an innovation. Besides commanding a lot of research on the domain of energy policy and planning -- which included the environmental impact assessment of developing initiatives previewed by the National Energy Provision Plan -- he also asked for an evaluation of potentialities to use internal natural resources for energy production at the local level in the context of regional development plans that needed environmental protection as a prime axis.



This program allowed to fund a lot of I&R projects focusing energy saving and alternative energy sources.

Nevertheless, the initiative of the state secretary that had the greatest impact on public opinion was his ordering the demolishing of clandestine summer houses concentrated in places at the sea and in the mountains. Pools published by the press, as well as opinion-makers, associations of architects and professionals in landscape planning, local administrations of the areas that were affected -- even those governed by the opposition -- and, of course, ecological groups widely supported the state secretary's initiative. However, the issue had further complexities and political implications.

Houses that had been built clandestine on public represented a typical case of non-legitimate private appropriation of a collective good. Thus, environmental authorities also argued on a moral basis. Actually, since the late 19th century, a 50-meter zone from the sea edge was by law considered public domain that could not be appropriated by private owners in any circumstance. Since the 1940s, however, precarious licences for provisional summer housing with the duration of one year had been passed. Resorting upon these kinds of precarious licences, or even ignoring them, the clandestine and illegal building of summer houses in enjoyable places by the sea and in the mountains had increased enormously the mid 1970s. Municipalities had even charged illegal occupiers of the plots with fines and taxes, and public companies furnished water and electricity services to the occupants. All this created the illusion of legalizing occupations. Since the late 1970s, environmental authorities and former state secretaries of the environment and natural resources had attempted to put an end to the situation. However, there were in most cases too many state administration services involved, going from local governments and forestry services to the ministry of the sea and port administration. They all dismissed the issue by pinning responsibility on the others. Due to either occasional divergence between state administration services, or to the lack of political will by politicians that had to decide about unpopular initiatives risking electoral scores, the resolution of the case had always been postponed or blocked. Apart from electoral risks, ability was needed to mobilize diverse state administration services from different ministries and state secretaries all together to carry out the affair. The endeavour suited the profile of the new state secretary very well, who forced

all state administration sectors to converge on a common action about the issue, clearly assuming all political risks and staking his own political prestige on the affair.

Although he counted upon the support by most local governments of areas affected, the initiative meant in fact a *tour de force* by the young state secretary and the government itself, since even the Social Democratic Party backing the cabinet seemed divided about the issue. The affair further mobilized the most important environmental groups -- such as *Os Amigos da Terra*, and *Quercus* -- which symbolically organized a tribute meeting in support of the state secretary. Ecologists from all over the country, officials of the environmental sector, high level civil servants, as well as politicians and local government administrators from different party membership, all participated in the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

As a whole, state action by the small administrative sector of the environmental policy field gained so far unknown impetus and visibility under the leadership of this state secretary. Particularly, the basic law of the environment was finally ready for approval in Parliament, after being consistently postponed.

This law represented a deep legislative change in the field and a big challenge for both the government and autonomous citizen organizations mobilizing on environmental issues. For the former, the enforcement of the law demanded great efforts in preparing and approving an enormous amount of further regulation bill in order to apply it.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the new law established a set of institutional duties for the government, which definitely would enact the environmental field as a policy domain. For the latter, it defined the legal and normative framework for their participation in policy-making as «public interest groups». Yet, it opened a brand new domain in the field of civil law, thereby making it possible to turn to courts in quarrels and conflicts about environmental issues. It would be finally approved by the parliament in the beginning of 1987 with no opposing votes.

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<sup>1</sup> The issue even got the attention of the international press. The Financial Times used the term «hurricane» to refer to the state secretary in reports over the issue.

<sup>2</sup> Actually, a package of twenty regulation bills were ready for approval.

A more favourable climate towards environmental protection and nature conservation was, thus, being created. This was also an incitement for many small environmental groups at the local level, mainly formed by rather young people aiming at recreation and leisure activities, to start going public in defence of valuable ecological sites against environmental disregard of local governments' plans and decision-making on urban development and local infrastructure building.

Actually, legal means to put a halt on environmental impacts of developing initiatives at the local level were very scarce. Minimizing and blocking mechanisms allowed by the EIA bill, which were implemented for several kinds of infrastructure, forestry, urban, tourist, and industry establishments directly promoted or supported through policy initiatives of the central state, were not yet compulsory. Moreover, there were restrictions at the local level on direct intervention by the central state in the environmental field. Competence over many developing areas was shared by several central state administration sectors, or between central and local state, thereby making effective intervention of the environmental administration sector often difficult. In many cases competence of the environmental policy sector was simply excluded. The protest of local associations as a means of pressure on both local governments and other sectors of central administration was, thus, welcome to help the environmental administration sector to be heard.

Meanwhile, the diffusing by press and other mass-media, or by environmental authorities themselves of important documents such as the Brundlandt Report, the basic law for the environment, and policy orientations by the state secretary made some new concepts -- such as «sustainable development» and the «polluter/user pays» principle -- to enter the jargon of politicians and policy makers in the fields of environment, development, and regional and local infrastructures. Thereby, it seemed as if a new kind of approach to environmental issues was being internalized by policy makers and development promoters, as the environment gained importance as a new dimension of developing policies. Environmental protection and nature conservation was suddenly becoming an up-to-date issue. The people and decision-makers either at central or local level were finally paying attention to environmental issues.

However, in the elections for the European Parliament of 1987, the state secretary for the environment and natural resources was a candidate in the Social-Democratic Party lists. The

press and public opinion saw this as a removal of the young state secretary from the portfolio forced by his opponents inside the government and the party. The successor was, nevertheless, recruited from the entourage of the former state secretary. The new state secretary future tackling the portfolio was also marked by the same basic orientations. However, he lacked the charisma, steadfast intransigence, and political weight of his predecessor, thus, making the environmental field as a whole -- that is, both state and civil society sectors -- to the leadership of the former state secretary.

In any case, important initiatives continued to progress. Particularly, the preparation of new laws was kept at a satisfactory pace, as the case of new rules for the administration of river basins, and the creation and recovering of new environmental protected areas. So it was the promotion of contract-programs, which agreed with industries and local governments over plans for gradual technological change and the introduction of anti-pollution systems. Technical and financial support was being offered by the state as an effort to promote gradual adaptations of several industry sectors to new and more rigorous rules implied by environmental laws and regulations following the European standards. Finally, the new state secretary maintained the same stand regarding the demolition of clandestine summer houses, and in blocking the invasion of ecological sites by tourist and construction industry developers. Nevertheless, in spite of efforts to provide the country with new and advanced environmental legislation, which was approved at a satisfactory pace, the lack of initiatives in enforcing new rules and bills effectively disappointed opinion makers and environmental groups.

## **5.2. A nuclear waste disposal «in the backyard»**

As everywhere in the world, the events of Chernobyl made the public and media to concentrate again on the nuclear issue. Portugal was no exception. The catastrophic climate originated from the Chernobyl accident was prone to «rumours», for instance, about security problems in Spanish nuclear stations on the banks of the rivers flowing across the Portuguese territory, or about «secret» intentions of the nuclearists to again dig up the nuclear power issue. In any case, the press suddenly had access to a report elaborated by the technical expertise of the

electricity company, in which a plan for installing four to seven nuclear stations in Portugal until the year 2010 was said to be still tenable. In addition, the prime minister made some ambiguous (or misunderstood) statements over the issue to the BBC in London.

This time, however, the rising of the nuclear issue in media-agendas seemed to be more of a false alarm due to the anti-nuclear climate the day after Chernobyl. The prime minister's statement was later clarified, and the electric company said that the report was part of routine technical research carried out by its experts, who periodically evaluated scenarios of energy cost's evolution. However, since former cabinets had never come to a final resolution about the National Energy Provision Plan of 1984, the fact was that the government was still committed to make a decision about it. The climate was, thus, still susceptible to make anti-nuclearists and the media believe that the issue was still latent in political agendas.

Actually, a real turnabout over the nuclear power issue occurred. In the beginning of 1987, environmental groups that had recently entered the European Environmental Bureau had access to plans of the Spanish government to presumably install a nuclear waste disposal site near the border, thereby asking the European Community to fund the project.

Immediately, the state secretary for the environment and natural resources presented a formal protest in Brussels against the request of Spanish authorities, and the Portuguese diplomacy initiated contacts in Madrid, Brussels, and Strasbourg about the issue. Municipalities in the area started organizing 'fighting commissions' and, in collaboration with environmental groups, prepared mass protest demonstrations. A strong anti-nuclearist climate overflowed the celebrations of the European Year for the Environment.

Similarly to what was happening in the other side of the border, in the Spanish region of *Salamanca*, the movement suddenly extended to the whole northern region. Environmental groups and local 'fighting commissions', which local leaders of mainstream parties and local governments had organized, were joined by interest groups of industries from the whole region in protest demonstrations. The Oporto Wine and the *Douro* river were taken as main emblems of protest, and the movement received the unanimous support of all political parties. Even European parliamentarians of the Rainbow Group, and groups and local administrations from Spain participated in protests.

A odd mix of actors, interests, and identity values, indeed, were embracing this one time unanimous anti-nuclearism! The nuclear issue, which a couple of years before had split the elites of the nation, was now a banner of the national interest discourse, making the most divergent interests and contradictory values converge. Such distinct collective actors as ecologists and industrial interest groups, so so far opposed about the issue, joined now forces. For once, ecology and anti-nuclearism became a «national interest» banner.

The emerging of protests on the issue gave popular support to the diplomatic action of the government. Diplomatic efforts of the government concentrated on exerting pressure upon Brussels. Actually, the issue also involved decision-making at the European Commission level. The project had been submitted to the commission for funding and it was defined as a laboratory to carry out scientific research about the conditions offered by granite geological structures for stocking nuclear waste. Moreover, it was said to interest other European countries in search for alternative technical solutions for nuclear waste disposal. Given the barriers that were risen for exports of nuclear waste and for using the sea bottom for nuclear waste disposal sites, European nations with nuclear power were then searching for internal alternatives.

However, some independent international experts remarked on the deficient evaluation of risks, and expressed doubts over some specifications of the project, which was said to leave the door open for future uses of the site as nuclear waste disposal. Thereby, the Commission asked for a mutual agreement between the two governments as a *sine qua non* condition to fund the project. And the Spanish government decided to give up, while diplomatic relations between the two governments became somewhat tense because of the issue.

These events were important in several aspects. First of all, for the career of the nuclear issue itself. In practical terms this virtually put an end to plans to install nuclear power plants in national territory. As a matter of fact, for the second time in a short period, the government and main political forces were compelled to explicitly compromise in refusing nuclear-power production programs. The reasons invoked by the whole nation to oppose Spanish nuclear-power initiatives close to the border were obviously the same that anti-nuclearists and ecologists had invoked when they opposed to previously initiatives of Portuguese governments to launch a nuclear-power production program.

In another plan, these events had also been important in that they were a new opportunity for environmental associations to join forces in common organizational and public action strategies, which contributed to the public and political impact of the campaign. The importance of the issue justified the creation of a coordinating commission to lead mobilization activity of groups over the issue. Starting by the initiative of associations attending the European Environmental Bureau, the campaign became a large protest, achieving unknown levels of mobilization and mass adhesion for issues of the kind. Yet, it mobilized also other kinds of associations, local governments and locals from the neighbourhood, unions, business interest groups, parties, European parliamentarians, and the government itself.

Certainly, the merging of anti-nuclear beliefs with the «national interest» opened broad consensus. It was also a particular feature -- maybe also paradoxical -- of this campaign. But the case is that environmental groups working and acting together mobilized on a large scale, further persuading other sectors of society to join (Lemos 1988: 49).

These achievements were also important due to the impact they had in mobilization strategies of environmental movement organizations in the future. Actually, the following years gave no reason for optimism to environmentalists. The commitment of the government to give priority to nature conservation and environmental protection fell short of their hopes with the dismissal of the former state secretary for the environment and natural resources.

### **5.3. Environmental protest and grass roots mobilization: «Under the eucalyptus tree»**

In spite of all efforts of the administration and of the momentary optimism of environmentalists, Portugal kept being pressured by the European Commission for accelerating the implementation of environmental directives and regulations. Although many plans for industrial modernization included anti-pollution measures, environmental performances of Portuguese industries were worsening with the growth of the economy. The correction of the gap to European standards was very demanding in terms of timing, funds, access to new technology, and policy options. Environmentalists started perceiving that the legislation «euphoria» of the environmental administration was an «illusory» device showing that the government

commitment to give environmental issues a new status was not credible, in particular when regional infrastructures and economic development policies were at stake.

Environmental considerations in infrastructure building projects started definitely losing the level of priority they had been gaining previously thanks to the strategy and political influence of the former head of the environmental policy sector. Policy makers of other sectors felt now less pressured from the environmental administration. In spite of insistent claims of ecological groups, the environmental administrative sector was not anymore a leading force internal to the state striving for imposing environmental criteria to overall policy-making. The monitoring of state action and decision making of other policy sectors, as well as of other public and private economic entities, was then elected as a primary action strategy by environmental groups, which persistently threatened to take claims to the European Commission. Thereby, the mediation of informal negotiations between policy decision-makers and environmental groups, when group claims were a real concern of state decision makers, started becoming a task ascribed to the environmental policy sector. The priority was to make the most from funds made available by the EU for infrastructure development and modernization of the economy.

A huge series of cases show how infrastructure workings directly commanded by the state and public enterprises were turning around the most basic and simple nature protection measures, but the best example is the anticipation of decision making about new highways in order to escape the EIA law appliance. Disagreements between ecologists and governmental members over the environmental impact of public works in course intensified, the former blaming the environmental policy sector of complicity on irreversible damages to the environment committed by unscrupulous developers and decision makers from inside the government itself.

A consequence of this new climate concerning environmental issues was the progressive distancing of environmental groups from the environmental policy sector and the state secretary himself. Even moderate and conservation-oriented groups kept their distance. In spite of their moderate profile, environmental groups were now called a group of «radicals» by governmental developers, which charged groups of opposing the modernization of the country. All claims for



minimizing environmental impacts of infrastructure development were just discharged as «unrealistic».

Thereby, state action in the environmental field began lacking consistence and coherence in the eyes of the public opinion, environmental collective actors, and even among common citizenry. For instance, while rigorous legislation was being published regulating uses of lakes and water flows for recreation activities, enterprises kept loosely wasting effluents into rivers and dams, making local administrations, populations, and environmental groups to despair over levels of water pollution. Sometimes, local administrations even found landscape and natural sites whose recovering they had been encouraged to invest in by the central administration itself, being damage by infrastructure projects.

Thus, unlike the previous state secretary for the environment, who left behind an image of proficiency, dynamism, and intransigency in defence of the environment among his political peers and opponents, environmental groups, media, and public opinion, the current state secretary, on the contrary, ended up being named (and condemned) by environmentalists as an accomplice of most unscrupulous developers. He was even blamed for not being able to make environmental regulations that he promoted to be respected by either public or private economic actors.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, after an initial period in which the leadership of the environmental policy sector was viewed as a «representation» of environmental «interests» inside the state and the government, it now appeared insulated from, and widely contested by, the environmentalist 'milieu'. Instead, it opted for a strategy of denying the relevance of environmental protesting in course, stressing a positive picture of the country in terms of environmental resources and amenities by comparison with other European countries.

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<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it even happened that developing projects blocked by his predecessor passed now -- to the surprise of environmental groups -- with only a few environmental requirements demanded. However, an exception to this wave of criticism must be referred to, which was widely recognized by opinion-makers. It concerns the intransigence performed towards lobbying and pressures by building and tourist industries, whose penchant for loosely erecting towers, hotels, and other big settlements near the sea was notorious.

In face of all this, a lot of initiatives with varying public and political impact, depending on opportunities and mobilization potentials of issues, continued to mobilize cooperation among environmental organizations. Actually, event opportunities for increasing environmental protest abounded in this period. The building of new highways crossing natural reserves and ecological sites; big infrastructure projects being undertaken without prior assessment of their environmental impact; the enlargement of shooting-camps for military air forces near natural reserves; ecological accidents offshore involving ships carrying oil or other harmful products; new and old industries, mining activities, and intensive agriculture pouring into rivers and affecting underground waters all over the country; tourist industry developers and local governments' plans to build near the sea, which the lack of territory planning rules at the local level facilitated; urban and industrial waste disposal problems invading the regions, etc., all provided opportunities for issue raising in public and political agendas, and for environmental organizations to enlarge the scope of action and improve cooperation among them.

The aforementioned issues helped to rise a huge wave of environmental protest directly promoted by environmental groups and eager media in search for larger audiences. It still encouraged local populations to launch local protest movements over local environmental issues, regardless of any kind of direct mobilization efforts carried out by groups.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the context allowed for environmental movement organizations to receive a new impetus. From then on, their opinion became a required factor of conflict resolution over environmental policy decision making and issues.

In the late 1980s many important environmental issue debates were an opportunity for groups and environmental authorities to collaborate, and groups were now receiving direct support from state agencies for the environment. However, this did not block their ability to

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<sup>4</sup> The most famous case happened in a small rural village in the north. Opposing the Government (and the police), the locals of *Barqueiros* blocked an open-air mining project of high quality kaolin in the surroundings of the village. Some dozens of people were injured in a confrontation with the police during the events, and a young man was shot to death by accident. Significantly, his coffin was covered with the flag of the European Year for the Environment. Press reports called the case the «kaolin war», and evoked the climate of 19th Century peasant riots in the region.

maintain a politically independent stand regarding state actors and political parties. Environmental groups had actively backed the state secretaries for the environment and natural resources of the last governments -- they had both been founders of *GEOTA*, an emerging important environmental group -- in many occasions. However, when the state secretary of the environment showed to be bound to policy making compromises with other policy sectors, they were able to take their protests farther in public arenas concerning several momentous issues.

This was the case, for instance, when the minister for agriculture launched policy measures promoting reafforestation which explicitly favoured the demands of the 'cellulose sector'.<sup>5</sup> In one case, the central administration of the forestry sector issued a decret-law inhibiting local governments from deciding on reafforestation projects that included large areas of fast-growing species in the territory of municipalities. The bill caused protests by both environmental groups and local governments. Forestry became, then, a «hit» issue for other reasons than summer fires, and cellulose enterprises, the number one «corporate enemy» of environmental movement organizations.

Cellulose industries had been promoting afforestation with eucalyptus trees for several years, thereby making profitable marginal plots of big and small landowners. By the mid to late 1980s this industry sector was particularly concerned about the deficit of raw materials produced by the forestry sector. Industries started then taking direct plantation initiatives mobilizing private land ownership to invest in fast growing forestry. They even established an agreement of collaboration with the *Confederação dos Agricultores Portugueses (CAP)* (Confederation of Portuguese Farmers), the most important interest group of Portuguese agriculture. The benefits promised by cellulose industries to forestry producers were very attractive for landowners, who were the target of an intense campaign using direct, personal contact to make them enter the business. As an attempt to block the invasion of interesting environmental areas with fast growing species, plans for plantation of native species and using EC funds were also proposed by the forestry policy sector. In particular, the mobilization of private landowners for these kinds

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<sup>5</sup> In fact, the minister and other high members of the forestry state administration sector later entered the administration board and executive bodies of big enterprises of the sector after leaving the government.

of initiatives was very important for recovering many forestry areas affected by summer fires. However, the success of state policy makers was short, in face of profits offered to landowners by the cellulose industry. Moreover, companies' employees were faster and much more successful than technical services of forestry administration in directly mobilizing landowners.

Nevertheless, local governments had since 1975 the legal means to block or approve afforestation projects within the territory of the municipality, depending on the size of the areas involved. Thus, the minister of agriculture prepared a new law regulating the approval of afforestation projects which revoked prerogatives of local governments to interfere in decision making about afforestation inside municipalities. The new rule ultimately concentrated on the ministry's power to decide upon all kinds of reafforestation plans by public or private initiative. Moreover, he also wanted to modify an ancient law concerning common lands, which were traditionally administered by parishes for collective use. The aim was to open these plots to private initiatives, which given the circumstances meant the opening of common land to private re-plantation projects with fast-growing trees. Actually, the law was later vetoed by the president of the republic and considered unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court.

All this heated the political climate over the issue and took the anti-eucalyptus mobilization to its peak at the local and national level. Some spectacular actions in support of locals' and small peasantry's protests were carried on by environmental groups. This gave a decisive contribute to put the issue high in public and political agendas. In one case, activists of the group *Quercus* and some locals chained themselves to the machinery of afforestation works. The press and TV channels were called to report the event while ecologists and locals were arrested by the police. Afterwards, they sent to the prime minister and the president of the republic the remains of the original tree species destroyed by the workers preparing land to plant eucalyptus trees in the area. The group later organized a successful petition for declaring the place a natural reserve.

Other similar actions rapidly spread to other regions in 1989. The group *Quercus* was then specializing in these kinds of actions. At the institutional level, protests carried out by environmental organizations were paralleled by pressures exerted upon central state authorities

by the National Association of Municipalities -- an interest group formed by all local governments -- aiming at blocking the approval of new afforestation regulations.

Reafforestation with the eucalyptus tree became, thus, the hit environmental issue of the late 1980s. Its economic and environmental impact was debated by scientists and opinion makers, environmentalists and developers, politicians and the public, using every kind of fora and communication means available, the parliament included. While some stressed its negative contribution to depopulation of inner rural areas and ecological desertification which risked to spread throughout the interior regions of the country, the others called the eucalyptus tree the «green oil» of agriculture and forestry sectors, since marginal plots could not be profitable in any other way in the context of European Community agriculture policies.<sup>6</sup>

The first effect of all this protesting came suddenly with a bill elaborated by the forestry administration, which reduced drastically the area of eucalyptus in reafforestation projects funded by the state. In this way, the government converged with the mainstream advice made by many experts that some moderation was necessary to guarantee an equilibrium between profitability and environmental considerations.

In any case, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, reafforestation with fast growing trees became an omnipresent issue in all kinds of public and political arenas where environmental issues were debated. Experts had been insistently called upon to participate in public debates over the issue, either by the initiative of the government, media, or other participants. The calling of experts in order to inform debates with scientific and technical data became a pattern accepted by environmental associations. They demanded a long report on the eucalyptus issue, elaborated by top experts and academics of several scientific fields. In some way, this initiative inaugurated a new strategy of environmental groups for launching and supporting issues in public and policy agendas. Since then, adding to argumentation based either on current legislation or on EU regulations and directives, the mobilization potentials of environmental issues in the public and

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<sup>6</sup> This idea was retrieved by the minister of agriculture in an official TV speech on World Tree Day of 1989. Actually, it is remarkable that it was the minister of the agriculture and not the state secretary of the environment to make an official speech about this celebration.

political arenas was also enhanced by scientific and technical research previously prepared or commanded by groups themselves.

## **Chapter 6. - Environmental Politics and Protests in the Early 1990s**

### **6.1. Giving the environmental policy sector a ministry status**

At the beginning of 1990, the environment and natural resources policy sector was raised to a ministry status, but its competence was not significantly enlarged, as the environmental 'milieu' expected. The new minister was recruited from a regional university and virtually «unknown» within both the environmentalist and party politics milieus, even though he was said to be very close to the developers' faction of the government.

The creation of a ministry fully dedicated to the environmental domain had maybe other purposes than a change in the priority status of environmental policies within governmental policy action. First of all, there were important commitments with EU environmental politics. Due to the presidency rotation system, it was up to Portugal to lead the EU delegation in the United Nations Conference of Rio de Janeiro 1992. Furthermore, the adhesion commitments with the EU included enforcing most EU environmental regulations and directives by the early 1990s.

In any case, a ministry status meant also that further autonomy in policy and decision making was given to the administrative sector for the environment. Due to the deficit of rule implementation and enforcement after the excitement of environmental regulations of the mid to late 1980s, the government was criticized for neglecting this sector. Policy making in the environmental domain was, thus, demanding more action, not simply new laws and regulations.

On the other hand, the recruitment of the minister from the university experts and not as usual from within the governmental party entourage, portrayed an endeavor to shape this policy field as an expert, apolitical domain. Actually, political and social conflicts over environmental issues were intensifying the contestation against the government. While environmental groups protested against the deficit of law enforcement and the vulnerability of means and resources to deal with ecological disasters, industries demanded the postponement of the «polluter-pays» rule and the revision of other recent environmental laws aiming at softening their stringency.

As a matter of fact, the environmental policy domain was sharply contrasting with the positive portrait of the performance of the government in other policy sectors. The government was receiving impressive acquiescence about its dealing with the nation's economic performance and regional infrastructure building. The dark side of this success was the «environmental deterioration in course» and the attempts of public and private developers to escape new environmental rules. Opposition parties were increasingly focusing on environmental policy issues. The EIA bill was then receiving particular attention. Thus, by giving the status of ministry to the environmental policy sector, the government seemed determined to face the most urgent and important structural problems affecting environmental performances of economic development.

Particularly, the interface between the environment and industrial and regional development was becoming an important locus of political conflict. Aiming to quickly approach European economic standards, policy-making priorities of the modernization process were causing high levels of environmental deterioration. Environmental policy inefficiency was insistently criticized by other mainstream political actors that shared the endeavour of giving the nation an image of a modern, industrialized, and advanced society. The moment was, thus, made for giving a new impulse to well-supported policy-making on the environmental sector. For this purpose, the mobilization of the expertise for the elaboration of plans and technical studies was a primary step.

It was within this context that a set of important policy initiatives aiming to face some structural and urgent environmental problems started being taken. This was the case, for instance, for industrial and toxic waste treatment and disposal plans,<sup>1</sup> and of territory planning rules for sea coast areas. Furthermore, a technical commission initiated the elaboration of a national plan for the environment, which was viewed as a fundamental tool aiming to finally inaugurate systematic, consistent, and long run policy-making, and to cope with policy initiatives and efforts of other policy sectors in ameliorating environmental standards of development.

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<sup>1</sup> The launching of preparatory studies aiming to define a scenario of options for location of a big incinerator and disposal sites for toxic wastes, suddenly gave rise to grass roots upheavals that lasted several years.



Admitting the lack of means for state action in the sector, the minister defended the need to launch a common environmental policy at the European level similar to the ones of other policy sectors (e.g. agriculture and regional development), which should take into account the specificity of environmental and development problems of European periphery countries. His proposal aimed only at extending EU financial aid to the resolution of environmental problems, but also to promote coordination at the European level on some environmental issues. An example of this, was the creation of an EU agency to fight oil tanker accidents in the North Atlantic, joining efforts of Spain, France, and Portugal on the issue (Lisbon Agreement). Another example was the attempt of the minister to make the European Union launch specific aid programs to protect the Southern European forest against summer fires.

However, the endowment of the new ministry of the environment and natural resources with competence to intervene in decision making on development issues remained unchanged. For instance, in spite of promises about new legislation concerning the protection of original tree species, afforestation projects with eucalyptus trees continued invading areas that ecologists claimed deserved protection, while grass roots movements kept mobilizing on the issue.<sup>2</sup> But competence of the environmental sector on forestry issues was restricted to forests covered by protected landscape areas and natural parks. Due to lack of legal competence to have a decisive say in most cases, the intervention of the environmental administration remained fragile about environmental impacts of development policies.

Moreover, the deficit of law application by state developers made environmental associations, ecologists, and opinion-makers disbelieve the legislative euphoria of the previous period. The opening of institutional arenas in order to make associations participants of decision making over environmental issues, as previewed by several environmental laws, was

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<sup>2</sup> Small-sized traditional agriculture sectors had represented an important pole of resistance to expansion of eucalyptus afforestation, which was said to use up plots' ground waters in the neighbourhood. Agriculture and forestry experts of state administration have never been very convincing about the levels of water consumption by the eucalyptus tree. A myth, or not, small peasants developed a sort of magical fear against the eucalyptus tree even in regions rich in water resources.

disappointing. Environmental groups were consulted but their opinions completely ignored in practice.

The best example of this disappointment came with the regulation of the EIA bill proposed by the ministry of environment. Against expectations of groups, the law did not create any specific institutional device for autonomous participation of associations in debates over EIA reports. They were just relegated for debates and consultation devices opened to the public, which were more restrictive and gave no access to detailed information about technical data which EIA reports were based upon. The law did not even define explicit institutional forms of public debates, and participation by non-state collective actors in decision making was very restricted. Associations were not allowed to monitor or have access to any kind of technical information about the EIA's course before a period of public debate was formally opened. Moreover, the time left for public debate was too short, inhibiting any possibility of gathering alternative data able to contradict the EIA's conclusions. Thereby, associations blamed environmental authorities of blocking participation and of transforming public debates over EIA issues to mere participation rituals with no influence upon decision making. Yet, they feared the law invite in practice to violation, due to low fines previewed in cases of infringement.

Nevertheless, the government approved the bill, boasting it was more stringent and extensive than the EU directive. In reality, the new law did not achieve some requirements of the EU directive, and some corrections were later demanded by the European Commission. Furthermore, the minister agreed to exempt highways, provided projects were elaborated before the approval of the law, which was said to have been postponed because of this. All this contributed to untrust worthiness of governmental actors pursuing more stringent and effective environmental policy-making.

Due to insistently deciding against expectations of environmentalists, the environmental policy sector of state administration, once a tacit ally of environmental associations, was now being elected their «number one public enemy». Furthermore, associations were accustomed to more openness, institutional dialogue, and participation in former leaderships of the sector, and they were now blaming the minister of «authoritarianism and inflexibility». Confrontation, not

dialogue, was prevailing in relationships between the environmental policy sector and groups every time a new issue was introduced to environmental agendas.

A notorious issue of the early 1990s was the will of air force commands for enlarging training shoot camps located nearby natural reserve areas. Surprisingly, the new minister dismissed former opposing stands assumed by the environmental administration and did not oppose military plans. Environmental associations were disappointed and returned to street action, mobilizing populations and local governments of the area, while claiming directly to Brussels that the Portuguese government broke its commitment to protect the natural reserve of the area.

Environmental associations' participation in the Environmental European Bureau allowed them new channels and further means of contestation against the loosing attitude of the government concerning environmental impacts of infrastructure development projects. Particularly, forestry, regional infrastructures, highways, and other kinds of public works, most of them counting upon financial aid by the EU, were particularly focused by groups' claims in Brussels. But other kinds of issues were gradually gaining a special status in environmental public agendas. Pollution poured by several industry sectors was increasingly affecting surface water streams. The case was particularly serious in more crowded and industriaized northern littoral regions. Some industrial sectors, particularly those in which medium and small-sized establishments prevailed -- the case of textile, food, and agro-industries -- had enormous difficulties in solving the problem of effluents. Having to resort to local integrated systems covering a whole district, state action was needed for planning, coordination, technical support, and financial aid. Since most environmental laws had been approved in a hurry to coincide with timing negotiated with the EU Commission for the inclusion of environmental directives into internal legislation, neither kind of resource allocation nor plans for enforcement had been foreseen, leaving small and medium-sized industries exposed to new legislation, which otherwise they considered too demanding for their particular case. Moreover, they were accustomed to state aid for modernization in view of the common market impact. Thus, they now demanded for similar support to enter «the environmental protection era». The simple enforcement of environmental laws risked to block the functioning of many industry sectors. For this reason,

industrial associations started claiming that industries were being unfairly persecuted by the environmental state administration. In practice, however, the enforcement of new rules establishing the polluter-pays principle was frozen.

Besides being unable to enforce environmental laws, very often state services and agencies were the first to decide against environmental rules. The period of law elaboration tasks, upon which participation and institutional dialogue with the environmental association field had established, had worn out. After the «legislation euphoria», more grounded, consistent, and coordinated policy-making which would have to involve and compromise other sectors of public policies, was necessary. EU programs and funds for conservation initiatives and confined policy actions, aiming at technological renewal in several restricted industrial sectors were not enough to make a truly environmental policy.

The elaboration of a national plan for the environment, which was envisaged but was concluded about five years later, represented the first effort to give rise to a new phase of environmental policy making. Yet, the preparation of plans to launch the foundations of more systematic and integrated policy actions the sector was asking for, justified primacy given to experts in the environmental policy domain. But this was made at the expense of dialogue and participation of other collective actors. It justified also the closure of the policy domain onto itself, although the conflictive climate of environmental politics was not letting the environmental administration stop and think about plans. The heightening of political conflicts due to direct environmental impacts of development and economic modernization amplified efforts made by environmental groups and the media in monitoring governmental action in the sector. Besides contributing for maintaining environmental issues high in political and media agendas, this climate of contestation also helped the expansion of basic elements of environmental culture within mainstream political discourse.

Expectations and promises about European funds and sponsorship for policy making in the environmental domain, accounting for the specificity and particular features of environmental conditions of southern Europe less developed countries, was now the main framing of environmental state actors' discourse. This discourse aimed at meeting both industrial developers and environmental opposition claims, the ones protesting against having to abide by

environmental policy criteria induced by environmental and developing conditions of northern European nations, the others for more resources, action, and stringency for the sector.

The creation of a more favourable climate for environmental issues was, thus, both a direct effect of environmental collective action and due to increasing pressures coming from European Union sponsorship of regional and infrastructure development. After the inclusion of environmental directives into the internal legislation, which national authorities have zealously fulfilled in the late 1980s, exigency was now centered upon rising environmental performance patterns of the economy.

The role of EU environmental requirements and demands had a lot of influence in three different, parallel dimensions. First of all, the European Union was an important sponsor of development efforts in course, making the standards and patterns of European requirements concerning environmental protection to become also a reference for the developing model of the nation. Then, its regulatory function had particular legitimacy due to their supranational character, that is, its independence concerning internal political cleavages. Thereby, the EU functioned as a kind of referee between environmental protection and development interests, both targets being equally sponsored. Finally, legitimacy of the EU to exert influence on internal environmental politics was amplified by its relevant symbolic role. The EU was an ultimate reference for the society's model that mainstream political actors had proclaimed since the late 1970s as a central dimension of the new national identity project. The European identity project justified, thus, all efforts towards portraying Portuguese society as an advanced democratic nation. Mainstream political actors were finally admitting that this target imposed also «advanced» environmental criteria to development efforts.

## **6.2. The expanding political grounds of environmental protest**

In April 1991, a new minister was nominated, after the predecessor minister had resigned for health reasons. The new minister successor was also recruited from the university 'milieu', and was an outsider to party politics. His previous engagement in public affairs had given him an image of being closer to the environmental «milieu» than to party politics. He had been a

leading participant of the expert commission that had elaborated the White Book on the environment, and the representative of universities in the Head Council of a state agency dedicated to promote environmental issues. He was, thus, well-known within the environmental politics milieu, which made his nomination for the ministry initially well appraised by groups.

The minister, indeed, needed to achieve the pacification of relationships between the ministry and environmental associations, and to change the negative image the ministry had recently gained among its potential supporters within civil society. Environmental associations expected more audacity and efficacy in driving the whole government to internalize environmental dimensions of policy-making.

As a matter of fact, the first important dossier the new minister had to deal with was precisely the internal structure of the ministry, which included the definition of areas of competence and articulation interfaces with other policy sectors. Although some new areas of competence had been obtained by the environmental policy sector during the last decade, new expectations on this matter were raised when the sector gained a ministry status. The territory planning sector, which previously had the tutelage of the environmental policy sector, was particularly envisaged. The prospects of the minister over this issue showed to be very ambitious, indeed. The idea of structuring the environmental sector as a «coordinating» ministry caring about environmental impacts of other policy-making actions implied interfering with the autonomy of such strong, strategic policy sectors as agriculture and forestry, industry, public works, and territory planning. Moreover, it meant also a radical change in policy-making strategy and priorities of the whole government. In the end, the minister only reached to halt interference of other ministries into the environmental domain. For instance, the competence that the agriculture, forestry, and territory planning policy sectors still had over parks, natural reserves, and landscape protected areas was finally transferred to the ministry of environment. The discourse about making a «coordinating» ministry had no other consequences than a retreat and further closure of the environmental policy sector onto itself.

Meanwhile, uneffectiveness of environmental laws and forcing other policy sectors to abide by EU environmental regulations and directives remained main targets of issue mobilization by associations. The lack of response of the ministry to these kinds of issues made

the number of claims presented by groups to the European Commission increase. The government was particularly blamed for breaking EIA rules in development and infrastructure building projects funded by EU programs. The presentation of claims in Brussels became the rule of thumb of environmental collective action. This often caused the European Commission to pressure the Portuguese government to abide by EU environmental directives, namely when European funds were at stake.

This wave of environmental protest had also effects on party politics opposition strategies, particularly on the Socialist Party which was preparing the strategy for the next elections of 1991. The neglect of environmental policies in modernization efforts of state actors under the lead of the social-democratic government, and the gap between legislation and implementation were particularly focused by the socialist. The government was blamed for having been minimalist about strategic laws that aimed at regulating the interfaces between development policy making and environmental protection, as in the case of EIA regulations. In other cases, such as water resource management and planning rules, the government was blamed of centralism, since local governments, environmental collective actors, and users' representatives were not given the means to actively participate in decision-making, as once promised in first governmental projects of the mid 1980s. In general, environmental law enforcement and regulations were considered permissive by the Socialists, and favouring demands and objections of economic actors at the detriment of nature conservation interests. Aiming to raise the rank of the environmental policy sector in state budgets, the Socialists even proposed to double the sector's share in the next state budget.

It is true that electoral campaigns had never represented a favourable opportunity for rising environmental issues in Portugal. The electoral campaign of 1991 was no exception. This time, however, intense social conflicts over environmental policy issues, and widespread criticism over the governmental performance in this policy sector made opposition parties to take upon environmental issues in party politics agendas. Aiming to profit from their negative impact on the government, environmental issues were receiving more attention from opposition party politics.

Nevertheless, environmental associations remained in the foreground of environmental politics. Permanent monitoring of state action was a boundless source of issue opportunities, and after a period of expectation, groups started confronting directly the new minister. The opportunity was given when the groups *Geota* and *Quercus* denounced the minister's tolerance towards the environmental performance of cellulose industries. The industries of this sector had signed three years earlier an agreement with the government for technological change and installation of modern anti-pollution systems. In spite of the positive economic performance of these industries, one year after the deadline agreed by parts the results were deceiving. Only one of eight factories had decreased pollution burdens to the levels previewed in the environmental pact agreement. Environmental associations feared, thus, that tolerance concerning this case would have a snowball effect upon other industry sectors. The government had previously promoted environmental pacts with the cellulose industry sector as a pioneering example of policy orientations that aimed at helping industrial sectors to increase environmental performances. Permissivity concerning this case, which involved a highly profitable and big-sized industry sector, risked, thus, to be disastrous for policy initiatives aiming to promote similar technological change in other industrial sectors, particularly those less means in terms of technological and financial resources.

Another rich field of environmental polemics was the localization of large infrastructures. The most notorious case by the early 1990s was the localization of the new bridge over the Tagus river in Lisbon. Drawing upon economic and financial arguments, the minister of public works decided for the most polemical option, imposing his point of view against almost all participants in the decision-making process, including other ministries, local governments of the region, and several technical and expert commissions. The ministry of environment was blamed for not fighting for the less damaging solution for ecological areas at stake.

It must be said that the environmental impact of the new bridge did not occupy the central focus of the public debate over the issue, but environmental associations were the most resistant opponents of the project that the government had to face. In particular, they stressed the impact upon a natural reserve recently created in the area. Environmentalists particularly feared the impact of urban and housing development upon green areas surrounding the natural reserve,



which would be inevitably originated by the project in the near future. The natural reserve affected by the bridge had been created in 1988 because of its important role for endangered migratory birds, which periodically visited the area. The reserve was considered highly valuable by national and international environmental experts, since it was a pilgrimage site for about 120 thousand birds of several species, whose protection was guaranteed by both national and international conservation laws.

For this reason, the *LPN* and other groups first complained to the Supreme Administrative Court aiming to block the decision on the basis of nature conservation legal arguments. Then, they complained also to Brussels, since the project counted upon EU financial facilities. As in other similar cases, complaining to Brussels would reveal an important means of action to force state actors being more rigorous in fulfilling environmental laws and EIA requirements.

The public debate over this issue had also mobilized other social and political sectors, since the localization of the bridge had other consequences in terms of urban planning. It even originated splits internal to both the governmental party and the government. Splits opposed in particular technocratic and developer factions to sectors more sensitive to environmental and territory planning considerations, while claims over lack of transparency on decision-making criteria emerged among several sectors of public opinion and political actors.

Thus, environmental associations blamed the minister of environment for having failed again. A defeat of the minister of public works was particularly important for associations. The «practical sense» and political profile of the minister of public works had already accustomed associations to decision making at the expense of most elementary rules of nature conservation and environmental protection. The case of highways crossing nature reserve areas and attempts to escape the EIA law were still present in mind. Once again, lack of effective participation in decision-making processes as allowed by political structures gave no other choice to environmental associations than to pursue public protest actions. Complaining to Brussels and the European Court was an attempt to, at least, exert some pressure against the breaking of European directives and internal environmental laws concerning the protection and conservation of the natural reserve affected by the construction of the bridge.

However, criticisms made by most participants in environmental politics over the performance of the government concerning environmental policies and issues did not have enough political and electoral impact, and the governmental party won the parliamentary elections of 1991 again. On the contrary, the performance of policy action in other sectors favoured by the government, such as infrastructure development and economic growth, seemed to be highly satisfactory for the electorate, which praised the governmental party with another absolute majority.

After the elections of 1991, some adjustments were made in the ministry of environment competence areas. Particularly, the ministry received the tutelage of sea pollution issues and all sea-coast zones and the coordination of policy and decision-making over all kind of territory planning issues concerning the national ecological reserve. These changes were certainly viewed as important advancements by environmentalists, but most of their concerns were about the need to foster environmental law implementation and enforcement.<sup>3</sup>

However, what came next was an intense changing of internal rules, structures, and staff of the ministry and environmental state agencies. Associations complained in particular over changes involving state agency's officials who had collaborated with, and were highly valued by, associations. Changes in environmental administration structures were justified by the need to re-structure the whole policy sector after it became a ministry. The former small-sized format of a state secretary was said to be incompatible with recent enlarging of competence areas and with the joining of state agencies inherited from other ministries. However, environmental association leaders mistrusted the extinction of state services in the area of nature conservation whose past was rich in collaborating with associations.

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<sup>3</sup> By the fall of 1991, the press cited a report elaborated by a European parliamentarian about the attendance of EU nations concerning transposition and enforcement of EU environmental directives. In this report, Portugal was one of the most defective in terms of either transposition or enforcement. Moreover, it was referred to as the case in which the creation of a ministry of environment had no visible effects in decreasing the gap of environmental policy-making insufficiencies. The report covered a wide range of environmental policy areas, and the low level of environmental law compliance by public and private actors was particularly noted. The portrait given by this independent observer was very pessimistic, indeed.

Associations feared that changes in the internal structure of the environmental policy sector aimed at facilitating decision-making by the administration at the expense of participation of the public and collective actors. Actually, a new wave of Nimby protests was emerging at the local level. Widespread resistance to the location of environmental protection facilities was blocking decision-making processes important to environmental policy initiatives, such as modern waste disposal establishments and treatment systems for urban garbage, incinerators, residual water treatment centrals, and so on. The participation of these movements in decision-making processes had blocking effects and were costly for the government, both in timing and trade-offs. Associations alleged that this wave was due to insufficiency, not excess, of public participation in decision-making processes. Local populations were said to be caught by surprise concerning decisions over location of infrastructures that not only ignored the interests of the neighbourhood but also were often said by independent experts as lacking basic, well-founded technical support. Indeed, criteria made public by environmental state agencies in charge of these issues were often very unclear, and local protest movements were frequently misinformed. Either due to the emergence of neighbourhood individualistic interests or to state-centered designs of decision-making, the environmental policy domain became a field of wide political contestation in the early 1990s.

### **6.3. The closure of environmental policy making as an «expertise» domain**

By the first half of 1992, environmental agendas were almost exclusively centered on the preparation of the Eco-92 United Nations Conference, which caused some changes in coalition arrangements of participants in environmental politics. Since it was up to Portugal to head the EU Ministers' Council in the first half of 1992, the minister of environment was in charge of leading the EU delegation for the Eco-92 Conference in Rio de Janeiro. Although not achieving high relevance in internal politics, preparatory works for the conference in Rio made it the environmental event of the year.

Mass media gave wide coverage to the event, highlighting in particular its significance for global environmental issues. The government ratified conventions over climate change and bio-

diversity, and the minister of environment proposed the elaboration of a policy program aiming to implement the Agenda 21 at the national level. The proposal had no sequence in terms of concrete policy-making, but some efforts were made by the environmental administration in order to identify what kinds of initiatives could be taken by state agencies at the central, regional, local, and every policy sector level of public administration aiming to promote Agenda 21 proposals. In 1993, public debates were organized by the environmental administration focusing specifically upon the idea of an Agenda 21 for the nation. Debate sessions had been highly attended by environmental groups, professional and scientific associations, universities, local administrations, trade unions, industry and business corporations, environmental opinion-makers, and representatives of state agencies of several policy sectors.

Other policy-making sectors of state administration were particularly invited for the occasion to prepare their own contributions to the national plan for the environment, which the government presented in 1994-95. The contents of the plan would later reveal to have been influenced by this debate on the Agenda 21 and by agreements of the ECO-92 Conference.

In some way, this was an attempt by the environmental policy sector to internalize Agenda 21 and other ECO-92 agreements as a framework of principles for current policy making. The aim was to finally develop environmental policies well-adapted to the particular conditions of the nation, resorting upon environmental policy goals that had obtained worldwide consensus. From this point of view, the national plan for the environment represented a further step in environmental policy making in Portugal. More than just being responsive to the most important EU directives in the field, it aimed to prepare the conditions, and give a framework for involving other policy sectors of state administration and most public and private economic actors in environmental policy-making. In this sense, the plan was thought to be specially adapted to particular socio-economic structures and development conditions of the nation. More important, while promoting enforcement of environmental legislation -- which resulted from adapting EU directives -- a set of policy priorities emerging from internal developing conditions could now be established.

However, the full mobilization of the whole government was needed to assume the proposal of an Agenda 21 for the nation as a global policy strategy. The response of other policy

sectors in view of improving environmental performances through their own policy making was very weak. This was proved by their poor participation in the national plan for the environment Plan. In practice, the idea of an Agenda 21 for the nation remained a good intention, while the original document approved in Rio de Janeiro continued being used by activists and associations as a guidebook for practical activities and issue claiming.

Nevertheless, the preparation of the Portuguese delegation for the ECO-92 Conference in Rio de Janeiro was also an opportunity to reconcile and to re-launch cooperation between the environmental administration and associations. More financial resources were made available for associations to continue research and nature conservation activities. For instance, in September 1992, the state agency *IPAMB* provided funds for the three most important associations to research about some «hot» environmental policy dossiers that were next on the agenda. The *LPN* was asked to study coastline deterioration in order to propose concrete initiatives aiming to improve environmental protection and promote recovering of coast sites. The group *Quercus* was instructed to develop studies on recycling and reducing urban and solid wastes. Finally, the group *Geota* was asked to prepare proposals on how to improve the participation of the public in decision making over environmental issues, in view of launching a public consultation process over the installation of a new system for toxic industrial waste treatment.

This initiative was paradigmatic in two different ways. First, there was the recognition of groups' expertise and knowledge of the terrain. Yet, all three issues would be next on the environmental agenda and were expected to cause strong local protest movements. Involving groups in preparatory studies for issue resolution meant committing them to the decision-making process in another way, particularly when unpopular decisions had to be made about the issues. In this way, rationalization of decision-making plus the expected support of most important groups seemed to be a better strategy than to negotiate directly with local protest movements and make them participate in decision-making.

This marked also the acceptance of environmental associations in the sphere of policy-making by virtue of their expertise, in particular of their knowledge of the terrain, which they had developed during the last few years by eagerly using funds provided by state agencies. This also contributed to the closure of the environmental policy domain as an «expertise domain».

In a certain way, thus, while state actors searched for further rationalization of environmental policy decision-making, associations were becoming important cooperators of the administration. However, cooperation meant also the tacit acceptance of an environmental policy agenda essentially defined by policy makers of the sector. This strategy often led associations to neglect participation in public debates about other momentous issues. For instance, associations revealed unable to impose their own issue-frames in public debates over issues which, besides their evident environmental repercussions, were «owned» by other policy administration spheres and bargained in public and political arenas by other actor-movements. The best example is their participation in the new Tagus bridge issue debates. Environmental groups remained the most steadfast opposers. They were able to prolong action through the construction period onwards, by means of permanent monitoring and denouncing damages caused by construction works on ecological sites in the neighbourhood. They even obtained the support of the European Commission for their claims, which at once blocked the draining of funds for the construction. However, in comparison with other kinds of debate frames, the environmental considerations over the bridge location had no great impact in public opinion, the press, or in expertise debates over the issue either, which imposed urban planning and traffic problems as main focuses of the issue.

Another example of the inability of environmental associations to decisively influence issue debates «owned» by other kinds of collective actors was the case of the new hunting laws, an issue that raised significant social conflicts and political cleavages. In this case, even associations specialized in bird conservation activities, thus, groups specially vocated to influence issue definition and which used to campaign over illegal hunting of endangered species, did not take any important initiative aiming to introduce the environmental point of view into debates in course.

Another policy issue area that associations and the environmental policy sector dismissed was territory planning, exception made when ecological sites, natural reserves, or areas of the ecological national reserve were at stake. Nevertheless, the early 1990s were also times of wide reforms and policy-making initiatives in territory planning at local and regional levels. Former territory laws, such as the agriculture and ecological national reserves, had never been efficient in

blocking lobby pressures and land market dynamics, which the construction and tourist industries resorted to, particularly, concerning coastal zones. Since budgets of local governments were strongly dependent upon taxes on land occupation of local territories, it was not easy for central administration bodies to resist pressures from both construction industries and local governments acting in consonance. Strict and unequivocal territory planning rules were needed to put an end to anarchic forms of land occupation.

Thus, while local governments were elaborating territory plans at the local level, which were enforced after the approval by central state administrations and the government, plans concerning areas considered of special interest for landscape preservation, nature conservation, and ecological resources, were also elaborated by the government. Different territory planning was, thus, elaborated by several state entities at central, regional, and local levels of the administration, according to the respective competence over different aspects of the territory. Therefore, plans often contradicted each other.

As a matter of fact, public discussions over territory planning systems were frequently a confusing crossfire of political, economic, legal, technical, and administrative arguments and interests, in particular when local planning was confronted with sectorial plans elaborated at the regional level by administration and technical bodies of the central state. Confusion increased when environmental protection and nature conservation plans for natural reserves, natural parks, and protected landscape areas in the regions were added. Besides the apparent lack of coordination of planning processes, different plans and planning levels triggered expectations of many participants, in particular of several population strata and private economy agents. Plans often contradicted previous decisions favouring local tourism and the construction industry, which resorted upon all kinds of legal artifices to impose vested interests obtained at the expense of previous legislation and law omission.

Actually, every time intentions to elaborate territory plans for the coast were known, two kinds of background moves by economic agents of construction and tourism industries began. First, there was the presentation of mega-projects in order to license them before more restrictive territory planning rules were approved by state authorities. Then, legal claims in court aimed at charging the state for having generated vested interests and economic expectations through first

instance or provisory approvals of construction projects. In the end, territory plans resulted from complex bargaining between private and public interests.

In this way, territory planning for natural reserves and landscape protected areas often resulted on truly unfair and selective rules. While ordinary citizens had to abide by rigorous restrictions for construction rights on their own plots, the same was not enforced concerning either big construction companies and tourist industries, or the state itself, when it was the case for big infrastructures.<sup>4</sup> Frequently, thus, Nimby protests emerged not only against the installation of big public infrastructures, but also against administration plans aiming to protect and conserve natural sites and the landscape.

However, this domain hardly attracted environmental associations, who favoured decision-making processes directly affecting parks, natural sites, and landscape protection areas. Unable to dictate environmental criteria to territory planning laws, environmental administration and groups remained confined to their «own» areas of the territory.

#### **6.4. Framing environmental issues as a «politics of modernization» affair**

In 1993, on the eve of new local elections, the Socialist Party started campaigning by particularly focusing on the government's performance on the environmental policy field. The aim was to convince the electorate about how the government failed in modernization efforts during the last years, and this failure was particularly apparent in the environmental domain. Aiming to mobilize independent environmental expertise around this strategy and to benefit from criticisms on environmental policies made by many experts not enrolled in state administration,

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<sup>4</sup> Some time later, the government even introduced a legal derogation allowing big construction projects, either public or private, to be approved at the expense of territory planning laws previously approved. The bill created the so-called «exception regime» for «structuring projects». «Structuring projects» were defined as every private or public infrastructure of «public interest» whose investment amounted to 10 billion *escudos*. Moreover, the derogation to territory planning laws had been approved by the end of 1995, after the government had lost parliamentary elections and while a new government was being formed. At stake were, at least, three big construction projects by the southern coast in *Algarve* -- the emblematic region of tourist industry.



the Socialist Party created an environmental forum to debate environment policy orientations as important dimensions of modernization that local governments should privilege. Pollution of river flows, sewage, wastes, and contract-programs established by the government with several industry sectors and local governments for installing anti-pollution systems were elected as priority areas of debate and criticism. Focusing on omissions and insufficiency of policy-making in these areas, the party intended that the socialist candidates at local elections should give particular attention to environmental problems of the regions. Promises were also made to take in parliament legislation initiatives for regulating the popular action right, allowing citizens to take polluting industries to court.

The fact that the first opposition party was betting on the environmental policy field as the main dimension of an ambitious electoral strategy was something new in disputes among conventional parties over the ownership of «green» issues. Through the years, only the ex-monarchic party leader -- who led then a small green party called *Movimento Partido da Terra* (Party of the Earth Movement) -- was able to appear as a «legitimate» user of the «green» emblem in electoral fights. The other green party -- *Partido «Os Verdes»* -- never managed to get rid of the image of «red-greens», its electoral campaigning being dazzled by their political sponsors. Furthermore, it was easily supplanted by a small far-left group called the Revolutionary Socialist Party, which was since long mobilizing with punctual impact in electoral campaigns on «new social movement» kinds of issues, such as ecology, anti-racism, women's rights, world peace, anti-militarism, etc.

Actually, these local elections were viewed by all as a test to the potentials of the government to pass through next parliamentary elections. The electoral potentials of environmental issues were also recognized by the governmental Party, which presented a former and the current state secretary of the environment as candidates for local administrations of Lisbon and Oporto. In the end, the electoral results of the governmental party candidates to the local administration of the two major cities were disastrous. Actually, they were second rank figures of the party, and the Socialists cumulated electoral successes all over the country.

Nevertheless, environmental issues ended up receiving no particular attention in electoral campaigns, at least no more than usual. In any case, environmental issues were now being

focused more often by mainstream political actors as the «darkside» of modernization policies pursued by the government over the last ten years. Actually, the future proved to be very eventful in terms of environmental politics, including policy-making initiatives and environmental issue impact upon conventional politics.

First, the resignation of minister of the environment<sup>5</sup> put an end to the experience of minister-professors in the environmental policy sector. The experience did not prove to be positive for the government. Contrary to expectations, the environmental policy sector had transformed into a field of political conflict. Experts were not able to impose their issue frames over more polemical issue debates, while technical «rationalization» of decision making was more than not a source of conflict. The original party independence and expert image of minister-professors was deceptive both in terms of de-politicizing the sector and of extending environmental criteria to other policy-making sectors. The most visible political effect of the experience was said to be the removal of the governmental party «environmental lobby» from the environmental sector administration.

Thereby, the choice for the ministry post fell upon a long-time party member, which in the last cabinet reshuffle had been nominated for the state secretary post of this sector. The new minister had also previous governmental experience in the culture policy sector, which revealed she was much more experienced politician than her predecessors. Her action in the post of state secretary of the environment had been characterized by some discretion. She concentrated in mobilizing technical services of the environmental administration and environmental sectors of local governments to prepare sectorial plans. This was the case, for instance, of a national recycling plan for glass, paper, scrap metals, and other solid waste. In 1992-93, she also initiated a program promoting initiatives to improve urban environment, and was also in charge of the implementation of ECO-92 and Agenda 21 resolutions, giving priority to planning and re-organizing the administration of natural reserves, parks, and other highly sensitive ecological sites. Last but not least, the new minister political performance started being noted by her

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<sup>5</sup> The resignation of the minister was due to statements concerning an accident presumably caused by negligence in a public hospital. The minister's statements were seriously considered as politically incorrect.

openness to dialogue with every kinds of non-governmental organizations mobilizing over environmental issues. Also, unlike her predecessors, she was paying much more attention to wider political incidences of environmental issues and grass roots protest movements.

The first important issue the new minister had to deal with concerned the impact upon water resources of the hidrologic plan of the Spanish administration, which previewed some restrictions to rivers coming from Spain. The negotiation climate over the issue created by both governments avoided the emergence of protests brandishing the nationalist banner as in the nuclear waste disposal issue, although it caused some quarrels between government and the opposition. In particular, the Socialist Party was becoming much more attentive to any kinds of environmental issues, so that, at the beginning of 1994, the environment was once again elected as a strategic domain by the opposition.

The strategy was similar to the one launched for previous local elections. After creating a forum to discuss environmental policy issues with a wide range of environmental experts, the party established regular consultations with the most important environmental associations as part of an attempt to insulate the government in this policy field and to convince the electorate of the inability of the government to consistently run the environmental policy sector. The Socialists' opposition strategy culminated a set of parliamentary initiatives aiming to constrain the government to take on some urgent policy initiatives.

The attention given to environmental issues by conventional politics in 1994 reached the peak when the president initiated an 18 days tour to pay visit to most compelling environmental problems of the country. During the last few years of his second mandate, the president decided to pay visits to the regions all over the country, aiming to have direct contact with, and to call the attention of the nation and of the government to, concrete development problems at the local and regional levels. In every case, he moved the presidency siege symbolically from Lisbon and temporary installed his staff in the region to be visited, as a gesture of high regard for the region and their people. He named these tours «open presidency». Besides his own staff, members of the government, parliamentarians, opinion makers, and other public personages with ties to the region were usually invited to join the president. Given the extensive coverture made by the media to «open presidency» tours, and the political relief of visit companions, these occasions

were the perfect opportunity for deep public debates over concrete development problems of the regions.

For the last «open presidency» tour, the president decided to culminate this facet of his last mandate by visiting *in loco* not a particular region, but some of the most striking environmental problems of the nation, thereby choosing criteriously the sites to visit by the exemplar urgency of their problems. The release took place in April 1994 with the usual media impact and grandiloquence of similar initiatives promoted by the president. In visits to sites, the presidential cortege was joined by scientists, university professors, professionals, technicians, members of local and regional administration, ministers and state secretaries of several policy sectors, parliamentarians, members of political parties, leaders of environmental associations, members of local governments and of the environmental administration, industrialists, common citizens representing local populations, and so on, who participated in conferences, meetings, and debates over the problems they had just «visited». Besides the impact of the event in the press, debates and conferences chaired by the president himself gave rise to the «biggest and most extensive debate ever on environmental issues in Portugal», as the press reported. Assuming criticisms or presenting complains, and using discourse to make sense of conflicts, blames, and divergence on solutions, for once environmental problems were unanimously elected as the most critical aspect of recent development trends, and environmental policy issues were elected as the first development problem of the country. For a couple of weeks, environmental issues received priority in all public and political agendas.<sup>6</sup> In this «ritual of blame» even the president took the opportunity to make his own autocritique, blaming himself for his indifference to, and neglect of, environmental issues as ex-premier, and ex-party leader. He sealed his conversion to the environmental cause by becoming a member of one of the environmental associations that collaborated in the organization of the «tour». In the end, only environmental associations had no «sins» to confess. The event indeed represented a relevant moment of propaganda for the sake of

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<sup>6</sup> Curiously, the motto chosen by the president for the campaign was to add a new «D» to the three «D's» symbolizing the key words of the 25 April 1974 political project some twenty years before: democratization, decolonization, development plus *depollution*.

nature conservation and environmental protection, and associations were awarded further recognition and legitimacy.

As a result of these events and debates about environmental problems, particularly focusing on the environmental impact of development efforts of the nation, the environmental question turned out being defined as a relevant development and modernization issue. Noteworthy, the environmental policy sector of the administration and of the government began receiving more attention in global policy orientations at the governmental and state level. The environmental policy sector gained further legitimacy to impose criteria to decision making of other policy sectors. New attention given by relevant political actors to environmental problems increased the status of this policy sector inside the government, allowing environmental administration to win some «battles» in decision-making processes. Although technical notifications of the environmental administration about EIA reports in industry, public infrastructure works, and big construction projects kept being non-compulsory, they started being more often followed by other ministries in decision-making processes, particularly by the ministries of industry, and of territory planning and public works. Public and private developers suddenly received less tolerance from technical services of the ministry of environment to development projects with evident environmental impact.

In June 1994, the press released what has been called a «black list» of the most polluting industrial enterprises and corporations, presumably elaborated by a state agency of the ministry. The list identified industrial enterprises that had recently been taxed due to effluent emission. However, the event truly caused an upheaval in industry milieus against the Article no. 24 of the basic environmental law, in force a few years before. The article referred to the celebrated polluter-pays principle and moderately reproduced the terms of the EU directive, thus, declaring industries responsible for destination and potential effects of residual waters flowing from production systems. Actually, the principle had never been strictly enforced as such. The government had opted for a gradual process of enforcement in order to give industries the opportunity to gradually carry out technical changes and the state to elaborate coordinating plans and allocate resources for technical and coordination support, subsidies, and contract-programs. However, when it was time to be more rigorous about the regulations, industries were blaming

the environmental administration sector of persecution, complaining that the government had directly translated the EU directive and ignored the resource capacity of most industries.

Apart from the virtual lack of resources and of willingness of industries to invest in environmental protection, the process often lacked practical and effective coordination, as in the case of small-sized industry sectors. In many cases, anti-pollution systems costed more than the amount of each industry investment. What was lacking, thus, was planning and coordination of environmental protection initiatives covering all sectors of policy-making. This is why the early to mid 1990s were more a period of planning than of action in the environmental sector.

Actually, by the fall of 1994, a couple of plans were finally ready for public discussion. In first place there was a plan to protect coastline sites against erosion. These areas had recently come under the tutelage of the ministry of environment. The plan represented the first policy initiative to unleash actions of coastline defence and conservation, after the demolition in the mid 1980s of clandestine housing.

More important, however, was the national plan for environmental policy, whose preliminary version was finally released in November 1994 for public discussion. Since the creation of the ministry of environment, the plan was successively promised by the ministers. It was thoroughly received by all as a highly valuable document. However, the shortage of ambition and moderation of proposals in committing other policy sectors to environmental protection under the coordination of the environmental sector was particularly addressed in criticisms to the plan.

Indeed, environmental associations were particularly deceived by the plan, which was said to practically ignore the need to enhance systematic coordination of all public policy sectors and administration services of other ministries. Thus, it was said to have no practical proposals for a cross-cutting policy action strategy involving all public policies in environmental protection as a common goal. Although having been invited to collaborate by presenting their own proposals, participation of other policy sectors for the plan had been very restrictive. Apart from outlining some areas of cooperation among several ministries, no other kinds of commitments to furthering environmental protection were made by the other policy sectors. The plan was zealous in defining some specific and immediate policy actions, but had short views in what concerned

strategic goals aiming at joining different dimensions of environmental policy action. It was clear that Portugal still had to deal essentially with first generation environmental problems, thereby having to give primacy to sewage, sanitation, and public health. Yet, the plan did not point to favourable expectations concerning the enforcement and implementation of environmental laws, in spite of the commendable efforts and celerity that had characterized the integration of EU environmental directives into internal law. Finally, the plan did not stimulate or even encourage participation of civil society and collective actors in policy and decision-making processes. Particularly referred to, were the kinds of collective actors not yet converted to the environmental protection cause, such as owners and industry corporations, and trade-unions.

Other criticisms concerned the small relief given to enhancing information systems and basic data gathering about the state of the environment, which the plan practically ignored. Still, there was not any kinds of proposals or perspectives for enlarging the scope of competence of the environmental policy sector, nor over the means to increase its financial resources. This made many analysts see the plan as a set of «good intentions», from which there were no important expectations in terms of practical consequences for enhancing environmental performances of the nation. Given the lack of participation of other policy sectors, economic actors, and such important actors in the terrain as local governments whose contributions had been neglected, the plan only committed the environmental policy sector itself.

Although resorting to the «sustainable development» rhetorics, the plan enumerated the kinds of actions the other sectors were supposedly able to unleash in order to minimize impacts of their policy action upon the environment, but no general strategic coordination of state policy action from the environmental protection point of view was proposed. Finally, in what concerned the role of private economy, economic actors were simply «invited to collaborate» by gradually starting to internalize the costs of environmental impacts of production systems, but no global strategy in this direction was clearly defined by the plan.

The minister of the environment admitted the plan essentially highlighted some important principles, orientations, aims, and resources for environmental policy making in the near future. Its limits were determined by the fact that the nation was facing a complex environmental situation, which was characterized by the confluence of first and second generation

environmental problems. This meant that, among the main axes of state action envisaged by the plan, priority had to be given to «overcoming the lack of environmental infrastructures», neglecting other aspects such as participation of civil society and enhancing effectively the regulation environmental impacts of economic activity.

### **6.5. The Nimby wave of the early 1990s**

When the EIA law was enforced, it was up to the environmental administration the organization of public consultations over environmental impacts of big infrastructure works. In most cases, however, the environmental sector was hardly able to avoid playing the role of legitimating other sectors's decision making, which usually imposed technical solutions unfavourable to environmental protection. Agencies and technical services in charge of big infrastructure projects were not accustomed to depending on participative decision-making processes. Thus, the consultation of the public was made only at late stages of decision-making processes, when solutions were practically irreversible and all other alternatives had been eliminated by multiple technical or economic reasons. In practice, consultation of environmental authorities and of the public aimed at to legitimatife decision making previously undertaken, promising to minimize potential environmental impacts «as much as possible». This was how EU directives and the internal law over EIA's were interpreted and followed in practical terms. Environmental impacts were relegated to mere *post factum* problems not worthy of alternative solutions. Usually, public debates over big infrastructures EIA were, thus, very deceptive to participants, in particular to environmental associations and local populations.

Local populations and other collective actors now had institutional arenas where to confront state actors' cost-benefit calculations and technical rhetorics, and they were increasingly participating (Gil et al. 1996). However, EIA public consultations never entirely received the status of bargaining and consensus-making arenas. Rarely, had state actors made radical modifications to previous decision making after public consultations. And when they did, it was a consequence of other forms of public mobilization. The public, environmental associations, local governments, and other locals' representatives discovered that, in practice, participation had



no further effects upon final decisions, which had already been made by state actors in charge of the issue alone. Within a new framework aiming to enhance democratic debate and participation, state centralism of decision making continued to be the rule of thumb of EIA processes. As a consequence, public consultations over environmental issues were completely ineffective in conflict resolution.

Resorting to well-founded criticisms made by environmental groups and the experts, local collective actors' contestation of technical and economic solutions proposed by state developers became more incisive, and collective action over environmental issues at the local level better organized. Often, local upheavals over environmental impacts of big infrastructure works began giving rise to the emergence of local issue groups. Nimby protests increased all over the country, and emerged often from public consultation processes carried out by the environmental administration. Frustration of participating in public debates and consultations promoted by state actors made it clear that Nimby phenomena were not simply an expression of particularist interests or conflicts emerging from confrontation of different issue definitions and rationalities. It was also a question of credibility and openness of decision-making process to participation. Public consultation turned into a simple simulacrum of participation. It had transformed not in participative decision-making processes, but rather in debates organized by state administration as an effort to convince local populations of the «good» reasons of state actors' proposals, while trade-offs concerning infrastructure benefits were often negotiated with local governments.

More often than not, what was at stake was the whole processes of decision formation, which centered much more on secrecy than on public methods. Access to data and technical reports sustaining solutions was often denied to environmental groups and representatives of the locals, inhibiting the presentation of well-founded contestation or alternative solutions by the experts of environmental groups. Several issue debates were exemplary of how technical and scientific rhetorics were used to legitimate centralism and self-sufficiency of state actors' decision-making in state of a fostering public participation.

One of the most polemical processes of the kind was the decision-making over the future location of an incinerator system for industrial toxic wastes, a problem that was becoming particularly serious. The lack of an integrated system to handle industrial toxic waste pushed

industries that had to deal with this kind of trash to turn to inadequate, and often illegal, stockage. This obviously counted upon the tolerance of environmental authorities. The problem reached particular urgency in industrial areas where chemical and oil industries were concentrated. However, industrial toxic pollution was widespread over the territory, due to the amount small-size industries dedicated to metallurgy, small machinery and car components, and others using chemical and oil derivatives, usually resorting to not very advanced technologies. The sector lacked any kind of coordinated structures to waste handling and stockage.<sup>7</sup>

The dossier over the issue had started off in 1987. The government was planning the installation of a brand new incineration system, enabling the nation to take care of its own toxic wastes. Successive hesitations of the environmental administration about location criteria occasionally precipitated the uprising of local protests. The launching of field work for preliminary technical studies was enough to give rise to local upheavals in communities. Hard negotiations with local movements' representatives and local governments were, thus, expected. The dossier reached a decisive stage in 1994, when EIA studies were launched in five pre-selected locations.

The ministry of environment initiated the decision-making process by creating a consultive forum, joining representatives of the universities and administration experts, industrials, local governments, and environmental groups for debating the issue. They met for the first time in May 1994. The minister insisted that no decision about technical criteria would be hidden to the public at any step of the decision-making process. Transparency was her preferred word any time she was asked about the issue, insisting that only pure «technical criteria» would be decisive in decision making about the location of the incinerator and other facilities.

While preparatory studies were following its pace, the ministry established negotiations with local governments of pre-selected locations. Basically, pre-selection had been decided upon the amount of toxic waste produced by industries installed in municipalities. In particular, negotiations with local governments ruled by left wing opposition parties seemed to developing

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<sup>7</sup> Besides this, even cases of illegally imported toxic waste from other European countries had then been detected, causing embarrassing occurrences and complex negotiations with other countries' environmental authorities. Greenpeace International had intervened in one occasion.

well. Paradoxically, they leaned more to accepting the rules of the game, and the case was that very often local protests against the location of the incinerator and waste disposal installations were promoted, and in part led, by local members of the governmental party. This made some leaders of local governments change their initial disposition to accept the installation of facilities and take part in protests -- e.g., the cases of *Sines* and *Grândola* in the southern region. In any case, the contestation at the local level did not follow the usual government *versus* opposition cleavage. This meant, at least, that the issue could be handled apart from party politics. This time, it seemed that the «public interest» and «purely technical criteria» arguments gained credibility.

The final choice fell upon a northern municipality where the most important pole of chemical industries in the country was located. The local government was led by a member of the Socialist Party, which had previously agreed with the choice due to compensations in local infrastructures for the region. But the locals were split about the issue, and a newly formed local group took the leadership of local protests.

Environmental groups at the national level had a different and more cautious stand on this issue. They avoided directly involvement in local protests, seemingly once again to prefer the distance from local upheavals. However, their argumentation purposefully served the intents of local protest groups. Essentially, associations found the incineration option to be better than the current situation, which was characterized by the accumulation of toxic waste in dangerous conditions, often out of control and abandoned in disposal sites that frequently neglected the most basic efforts of avoiding contamination. Their criticism fell upon the lack of an integrated policy involving industries and environmental state actors to promote waste reduction. Still, they had the opinion that incineration was justifiable only as a complement of policy action aiming at reduction, recycling, and re-utilization of industrial waste, giving, thus, preference to small or medium-sized incineration units using the most advanced and innovative technologies. The government was blamed for not having made any efforts in this direction. On the contrary, they argued, a big incineration system as planned was the best way to promote waste production in order to make the system cost-effective. Thus, they added, this was a political not a purely technical option. Moreover, they found that most advanced technical alternatives had not been

considered, and technology options of the incineration system were said to be not the most advanced in terms of environmental criteria.

Furthermore, associations once again assessed the opportunities to participate in debates and *fora* over the issue as highly negative. The ministry was blamed for lack of coordination and of misinforming both the experts and the public in debates. Often technical data made available by representatives of the ministry were said to be out of date or were considered unreliable by independent experts, making associations disbelieve the ecological modernization will of the government. The ideas of recycling, reduction, and re-utilization, they said, entered environmental policy-makers' discourse but not policy-making practices.

By that time, other kinds of waste treatment instalations were also contributing to the uprising of Nimby protests, as was the case of localization of urban waste disposal sites. The «purely technical criteria» argument was hardly acceptable to the locals, and it did not convince most influent environmental associations either, which dismissed to collaborate or support the ministry over these kinds of issues. In this case, the government had decided to sponsor the creation of semi-private industries to deal with urban waste treatment and disposal, thereby opening this sector to private business. The problem was that business makers had no vocation to decision-making processes in which populations and other representatives of the public had to be heard. Sometimes, there were even cases of deceived promises by companies to the locals, which further aggravated the mistrusting climate on the environmental sector of the state.

According to Nimby movements, the ministry of environment was no more a set of state agencies involved in cleaning and protecting the environment, but rather a set of polluters menacing the neighbourhoods. Nimby protest demonstrations and electoral boycotts by reasons related to location of incinerators and industrial or urban waste disposal sites began expanding. The movement developed independently from environmental conditions prevalent in the neighbourhoods. In some cases, it was up to rural populations far away from industrial poles to refuse being «the garbage can of industries and of the urbans». In other cases, the locals refused to accept technical changes transforming a provisional and since long out of control waste disposal site into a controlable, but definitive one. Often, technicians in charge of field work for preparatory studies concerning the environmental impact assesment of waste disposal

infrastructures feared persecutions by the locals. At the 1994 elections for the European Parliament, about 14,000 voters had refused to vote, thereby adhering to electoral boycott initiatives at the local level in protest against presumable environmental problems, which mainly were related to potential locations of waste disposal and treatment systems.

All these kinds of protests shared a common characteristic: they emerged and developed spontaneously or, at least, not necessarily supported upon mainstream party organizations or unions at the local level. Nevertheless, local leaders of whatever mainstream party -- the governmental party included -- often participated. And they often gave rise to local environmental groups, which afterwards sought the support of established environmental associations. Although not being at the origins of this movement, and sometimes even being suspicious of it, environmental associations at the national level had further exerted important influence upon it, either supporting the formation of new groups, or making technical information and expertise available to be used as discursive argumentation in protest actions.

At the same time, independently of the goodness of the issue, mistrust upon environmental state agencies became the rule. Disbelieving formal negotiations, local protests often took the form of counter-movements opposing environmental protection initiatives. Pushed by protests, local party leaders or heads of local governments, either from the governmental or opposition parties, got used to contesting state decision-making affecting local resources or the municipality's territory. This became common phenomena of every day politics, which mass media and, particularly, TV channels were eager to amplify.

Since environmental protection of many sites demanded restrictions to hunting, construction, agriculture, and other economic activities, even territory planning measures concerning natural parks and reserves became a target of local contestation. Local protest movements against simple practical rules to protect environmental sites were making clear the inability of environmental state action to go beyond ecological rationality in order to abide by democratic participation rules in decision-making processes.

Moreover, due to the lack of integration of environmental associations at the local level, it even happened that initiatives of environmental protection they were particularly promoting faced resistance by the locals. An worthwhile example comes from a site near the border, in

which the association *Quercus* bought some land to develop nature protection activities. Given the ecological potentials of the area, ecologists of this group had proposed to the environmental administration the creation of a natural park, whose extension through the other side of the border was also guaranteed by Spanish administration and groups. However, a decree creating the natural park of Tagus international was suddenly made public before any kind of debate or formal consultation of local authorities and populations had been made. Even dialogue with the association itself about the timing and contents of the decree was said to have been ignored. The emergence of a conflictive climate was inescapable, given the framework of restrictions to hunting, construction, and agriculture implied by the decree, which the state agency in charge of the issue elaborated and made public without previously hearing the associations and the locals.

Due to expectations of blockades resulting from Nimby protests over environmental policy issues, the lack of previous negotiations with local interests at stake, which was not new in decision-making practices of central state agencies, became also a rule in decision-making processes of the environmental sector. This accentuated cleavages between policy-makers of the environmental field and associations, and aggravated the protesting climate by populations and local leaders. Nimby protests invaded policy-making of the environmental domain, covering either cases of presumable environmental impacts or of restrictions to economic activities in areas ascribed to natural reserves and landscape protection. Environmental policy action was now facing the same kinds of local protest other policy sectors had already experienced due to environmental impacts of infrastructure building.

Adding to the lack of information and, maybe, of environmental sensitivity of populations, local protests had another characteristic in common. Locals mistrusted technical discourse supporting decision making of state actors, but they also were reacting against the secrecy of state administration dealing with public issues and lack of effective participation in decision-making processes.

## Chapter 7. - The Politics of Environmental Groups (II) - Second Period (1986-1995)

### 7.1. Movement associations and the environmental policy domain

In 1987, a specific bill for regulating the public status of environmental associations and institutionalizing their participation in public environmental issue arenas and in policy-making processes of the environmental policy domain was voted in parliament as a complement to the basic law for the environment. The law for environmental associations was actually rather innovative within the internal context, and a unique opportunity for movement organizations to step out from their «ghetto» and take a place in public and political arenas where environmental issues were at stake.

The law provided environmental groups with a legal status to participate as «social partners» at several levels of decision-making structures of the environmental policy domain, and entitled them to be consulted and informed about every kinds of environmental policy initiatives. Furthermore, environmental associations were allowed to promote judicial proceedings aiming to prevent environmental damages, though having to resort to a public prosecutor for court proceedings, and to have access to information from central, regional, and local administrations. On the other hand, the law committed the state to provide environmental groups with technical and financial support for improving their technical and scientific skills and to strengthen their means of propaganda and environmental education. Finally, the law for environmental associations created a legal framework for their participation in several consultation bodies of the administration and in state agencies of the environmental policy domain at both central and regional levels. This included, for instance, the Directive Council of the *Instituto Nacional do Ambiente-INAMB* (National Institute for the Environment), the Advisory Commission for Ecological Labeling, advisory councils of protected areas, monitoring commissions for air and water pollution, the *Conselho de Concertação Económico-Social* (Economic and Social Bargaining Council)<sup>1</sup> and others (Martins 1988; Lopes and Gaspar 1993).

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<sup>1</sup> On this agency see Chapter 2, p. 64.

The list of rights ascribed to environmental associations by this law was considered by many local observers as very «generous» in comparison to rights ascribed by the state to civil society associations of other fields (e.g. Amaral 1994: 376). Unfortunately, it remained unregulated for a long time, meaning it was not applied in many aspects. The lack of further regulation was particularly significant in what concerns the participation of associations in regulatory state bodies, and in general at the local and regional level of the environmental administration. Yet, it was not so «generous» in allowing participation of environmental associations in decision and policy-making structures of other policy sectors, in which even policy makers of the environmental domain also found it hard to have a say. Furthermore, the lack of regulation and implementation of the basic law for the environment also hindered in many ways the achievements of participation afforded to environmental groups.

High expectations were placed by environmentalists in both new laws. Groups had the opportunity to considerably extend their scope of action and issue mobilization. They started participating more decisively in the sphere of environmental politics, suddenly becoming a permanent «public eye» searching for and denouncing all kinds of damages upon the environment caused by either public or private developers. Most groups active by the mid to late 1980s were formed by just a few young people, and their constituency continued to be very small. Fundraising hardly went beyond constituency contributions and meagre subsidies from local and central state agencies. Resources were very scarce, as were campaigning skills and knowledge resources for effectively carrying on a relevant role in the public sphere of environmental politics. However, thanks to means made available by the EC for activities of propaganda, education, and research on environmental and nature conservation issues, which initiated with the celebrations of the European Year for the Environment in 1987-88, state authorities began to provide many environmental associations with financial support, organizational resources, and other kinds of incentives that helped groups to sustain and improve regular activity. Many groups had then a decisive opportunity to consolidate their organizational structures.

In 1987, the European Year for the Environment Program included a large campaign to increase the sensibility of the public towards environmental problems. Aiming to launch the grounds of further policy action to improve the attention of the public to environmental issues,



state actors mobilized groups from all over the country, of all sizes, and different mobilization interests. Until then, many local groups, had only strived for survival due to instability of organizational structures, and were mainly oriented towards environmental education, and recreational activities. They were now given more incentives to continue and strengthen their action (Pimenta et al. 1993: 151).

The moment was also favorable for the emergence of new organizations and the renewal of some older ones. The most skilled and well-off for organizational resources started having access to EC-DG XII Programmes, which provided funds that associations used for improving their expertise and technical skills, thereby enlarging their scope of research in nature conservation issues. This kind of activity attracted many young people to associations. Yet, establishing relationships with the EC environmental milieu also gave the opportunity to enlarge contacts and collaboration at the international level too.

Four associations began then taking the front line of environmental protest and participation in environmental issue debates: *Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (LPN)* (League for the Protection of Nature), which abandoned its traditional reserved posture about participation in public debates; *Os Amigos da Terra* (Friends of the Earth), which remained faithful to political ecology original orientation; *Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e Ambiente (GEOTA)* (Group for Territory Planning and Environmental Studies), which had been founded by a group of young scholars and experts that specialized in territory planning, energy, natural resource economics; and *Quercus -Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza* (National Association for Nature Conservation) which emerged initially from the conservationist trends of the movement. The group *Quercus*<sup>2</sup> gradually became a nationwide group by establishing delegations covering all regions. It developed a particular vocation for launching, and participation in, public debates, enlarging the scope of issue-interest to all kinds of environmental policy issues. It may be the leading group both in terms of constituency, membership, size, and public impact.

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<sup>2</sup> *Quercus* is the Latin word for the prevailing tree species of the country's original landscape.

The year of 1987 also marked the beginning of regular, mutual collaboration of most sounding environmental organizations, particularly between those referred to above. They first started cooperating in the European Environmental Bureau, and after campaigning together against the Spanish plans for building a nuclear-waste disposal near the border, they joined for important campaigns against reafforestation with fast-growing tree-species.

In the meantime, the government created a public agency aimed at promoting environmental education and at supporting autonomous citizen organizations in the field. Among its prerogatives, the *Instituto Nacional do Ambiente-INAMB* (National Institute for the Environment) had to provide financial and technical aid to environmental associations, according to requirements fixed by the law for environmental associations and which they had to abide by.

Although consultation of associations and access to detailed information about policy issues or decision making was compulsory by law in many cases, the lack of further regulation of many environmental laws blocked effective participation of associations concerning a good few environmental and development policy issues. Furthermore, the rights of participation in institutional arenas and the access to information internal to the administration were dependent upon the category ascribed to associations by the *INAMB* in accordance to criteria previewed in the law for environmental associations. The conditions which associations had to abide for in order to receive a statutory status consonant with their aspirations were considered very demanding (Garcia 1989: p.16). After the law, associations were classified as local, regional, and nationwide, the decisive criterion being not the geographic scope of action or the vocation publicly assumed by associations, but their constituency size. They had to have a minimum membership -- 200, 1,000, and 4,000 members respectively for local, regional, and national associations. These numbers were considered by groups and analysts as excessive and not adequate to the current group standards (Lemos 1988: 49). Most associations that were locally based or site-issue oriented hardly reached the number of 200 members, while those whose purpose and scope of action was nationwide hardly had enough membership to fit the constituency requirements of the law. Since there was no tradition in developing a constituency of non-active supporters. Usually, the associations' statute defined constituency as active members eventually contributing with a fee. In practice, there was no association which could abide by

such demanding requirements in order to get the nationwide or regional status. Also, those effectively acting at the local level could hardly afford 200 members. Some groups found a solution in «artificially» enlarging constituency by formally recruiting the relatives of activists (Gomes 1991: 33). In this way, only the most important, credible, and well-organized groups, whose scope of action was steadily growing nationwide with several delegations at the local and regional level, reached the category consonant to their original vocation. For most cases, however, the rigor of law criteria left associations' demands for having access to rights consigned by the law at the discretion of administration officers, policy-makers, and governmental authorities.

More important, the agency also initially promoted what was then an expectable turning point in the organization field of the environmental movement: the creation of a representative 'peak' entity formed by a great number of associations. Following the bill that created this agency, its directive council had to include association representatives. Besides the head of the agency, which was directly nominated by the state secretary of the environment, the directive council of the *INAMB* still included the following: (1) two experts on the environmental field nominated by the parliament and universities, (2) representatives of both trade-union peak federations, and (3) two representatives of environmental associations. Since there was no any kind of federative organization that could afford the representation of environmental associations at the peak level, the President of the *INAMB* took the initiative of directly contacting all associations known in the milieu, formally registered or not at the *INAMB*, aiming to mobilize them over the representation issue. Throughout this process quite a few organizations mobilizing on environmental and nature conservation issues all over the country were virtually called for a national meeting of environmental associations in December 1989.

Although organized under the auspices of a state agency, the meeting was endorsed by some well-known associations. The election of representatives for the directive council of the state agency served as a pretext to bring about all associations in discussing the movement coordination at the peak level. The meeting was reported to be the biggest ever called by environmental groups. Even the state secretary for the environment and natural resources paid a visit and made a speech. The event mobilized about 70 organizations from several orientations, which included political ecologists, conservationists, heritage protection groups, life quality and

consumers' defence associations, etc. The statutory basis of a confederation was confirmed and participants elected a commission to install the new peak organization of the environmental movement «industry».

The *Confederação Portuguesa das Associações de Defesa do Ambiente* (Portuguese Confederation of Environment Defence Associations) was formally founded in 1991. Its main goals were to officiate corporate representation of environmental associations in negotiations and relationships with environmental authorities and other social interest groups, and to play the role of an institutional forum of debate internal to the movement where dialogue and discussion about the movement orientations and strategic goals might take place. In any case, the organizational autonomy of every association was guaranteed (Pimenta et al. 1993: 153).

The Confederation included initially about 50 associations, most of those that were present at the foundation meeting. As portrayed by the law for environmental defence associations, a comprehensive conception of environmental associations was assumed, which extended beyond the classic category of ecology and nature conservation mobilizers (op. cit.: 154). This justifies the number of adherents. However, a few preferred to remain outside the Confederation, or came later to separate.

Among the outsiders, some were undeniably important references of the environmental movement. They decided to step aside due to mistrusting the interference of state actors in organizational initiatives of the association movement. In other cases, they simply did not accept the «one group, one vote» rule inscribed in the Confederation's statute voted by the majority of associations. They argued that the principle of one per association independently of their status, gave too much voting weight to small, local associations by comparison with national groups, which in some cases had several nuclei or delegations at the regional level with no right to autonomously voting about the affairs of the Confederation. However, at least they mostly agreed at least on a framework of permanent contacts and collaboration and continued to participate in initiatives launched by the Confederation. Thereby, the calling for debates over the strategy of the movement, and the election of associations' representatives to participate in institutional arenas and consultation bodies of state agencies were generally extended to groups that formally had not adhered to the confederation.

The fact that some of most influential associations decided to remain separate may explain the modesty of the impact and activity carried out by the confederation for the times to come. In practice, it further transformed into a peak-organization of essentially local groups, which mostly lacked organizational skills and resources to make it play an important role in environmental politics. The confederation held national meetings of environmental associations every year. As usual, meetings were aimed at strengthening the role of the confederation as a peak organization of the movement by means of enhancing coordination of associations' activities and of their participation in public and institutional arenas. However, annual meetings just represented an opportunity to make participants debate and repeat claims over improving the participation of citizen groups and the public in decision making over environmental policy issues. At least, insistent demands on the need for further regulation and implementation of the basic law for the environment, in particular in what concerned participation of environmental associations in policy decision making, were made every year by associations altogether. No strategic or action targets, aiming to develop coordination for achieving mobilization goals were actually decided at these meetings. Most influential and well-organized associations continued to lead mobilization activities, protest actions, and participation carried out on the terrain. As a matter of fact, a small group of big associations that shared the foreground of environmental politics refused to abdicate their growth and ambitions in favour of a coordinating peak organization they were not able to control due to the «one group, one vote» rule.

It is worthwhile to remember that the political ecology pioneers, whose radical stand and ideological orientation aimed at involving associations in a more political-oriented organizational project, abandoned definitely the association field in the occasion. They were frustrated by the moderate options a the new generation of association activists that imposed the creation of a Confederation. They later ignited successive, though not very successful, initiatives to found an alternative green party or some other sort of movement organization able to congregate dissent environmentalists and ecologists for a more explicit kind of political action.

In any case, environmental associations received then important stimuli from state actors, and a real change occurred when the most important associations began to collaborate with each other. They launched several common initiatives about issues rising in public, political, and

environmental policy agendas, going from seminars, meetings, and conferences, to street protest actions and other forms of propaganda. Curiously, however, conclusions from most debates about the movement strategy always reiterated that «environmental associations [did] manage without state tutelage, and know how to organize by themselves» (*ibid.*). These kinds of repeated statements revealed, indeed, an uneasy stand about the role played by state agencies of the environmental policy sector in enhancing organizational options and resources of the movement.

The most important initiative at the beginning of this period was perhaps the group participation at the European Environmental Bureau, which included initially six associations (Garcia 1989: 16-7). Although, some dissension emerged at the very moment of electing their representative for the executive council of the agency (Lemos 1988: 49), sharing representation duties in an international instance opened the opportunity for cooperation in nature conservation projects and further imposed a framework of permanent collaboration which extended to other local and regional level associations.

The same must be said about the new institutional arrangements for participation in several institutional bodies at the national level. In particular, the proceedings for the ongoing representation of environmental associations in several consultation bodies and institutional arenas as allowed by the law for environment defence associations, although often directly promoted by state actors, opened the opportunity to establish a more permanent frame of collaboration among associations directly or indirectly involved in this shift of the movement. It further revealed to be useful in facilitating communication among groups, allowing their coming together in mobilization actions over momentous environmental issues. For instance, it highly facilitated the joining of groups in what was perhaps the most important campaign of the period against the installation of a nuclear waste plant in the northeastern border.

By promoting the strengthening of environmental associations, the environmental policy sector of the administration was also enhancing political support from within civil society to efforts empowering the sector within state structures. The autonomy of environmental movement associations regarding party politics was well-suited to this strategy. To a certain extent, even the strong criticism of associations about the environmental disregard of development policies

contributed to empower the environmental administration within governmental policy making structures.

The duality of this political strategy involving most influential associations in alliance with the environmental policy leaders in the government -- which was initiated by the first state secretary for the environment and natural resources of this period who was founder of one of the most important environmental organizations -- is well exemplified by debates and mobilization action concerning two issues that caused remarkable public impact in the late 1980s. Both issues are eloquent about the framework of mutual support and tacit alliance that was being established between environmental associations and state actors of the environmental policy sector of the state. The first issue was the initiative of the state secretary for the environment and natural resources of the mid 1980s to demolish thousands of summer houses illegally built over the years within natural reserves near the coast. The other issue had to do with reforestation policy initiatives with fast-growth species.<sup>3</sup> But in other cases too, every time other ministries decided on infrastructure and industrial projects ignoring reports about their environmental impact, broad debates in public arenas had been launched by the initiative of environmental groups. At the same time, they were collaborating with, and receiving financial support from their «friends» within the environmental administration.

This was obviously viewed by many as an equivocal strategy (Lemos 1988: 50), and it caused a lot of debates within the movement. Organizations and activists accused the others of ambiguity towards, or dependence from, the state by «getting used to state subsidies, and of having too many links to environmental state agencies and the government». Associations were said to have been caught «under the illusion of participating in the sphere of political power», and in a «web of dependency that kept them docile and under control». In other words, of being manipulated by a government that did not care much about the environment, in spite of the environmentalist profile virtually ascribed to the leadership of the environmental policy sector (Rosa 1990: 61).

These contradictions primarily affected political ecology groups that were «caught» by this new institutional environment of the movement. The best example is maybe the group *Os Amigos*

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 5.

*da Terra*. The group was one of the most influential by the mid 1980s, and started to decline due to internal dissension caused in part by the ambiguity of relationships between the group and state actors.

The new framework of interchange and collaboration between associations and state actors of the environmental sector, which began in the mid 1980s, raised, thus, intense debating within the movement. A new generation of environmentalists, who became the core of membership and leadership of most resourceful associations, considered the new institutional framework of collaboration between state actors and associations as thriving and not menacing the political independence and organizational autonomy of associations. Others, however, saw it as a zero-sum game, in which associations abdicated their autonomy and independence towards governmental actors.

The initiative of state actors from the environmental policy sector to approach environmental movement organizations from a new institutional framework definitely changed the contents of debates internal to the movement over organizational alternatives and strategic options at the peak level. In a certain way, the terms of the debate radicalized and the sponsorship of state actors to groups refusing to give a politically biased orientation to environmental action had highly contributed to the fading out of 'green party' politics.

## **7.2. The fading of green party politics**

Attempts to constitute a green party grounded upon the autonomous field of environmental movement organizations continued to emerge in this period from both inside and outside the environmental movement «industry». Invariably, these kinds of initiatives were promoted by either genuine pioneers of environmental activists, or by former leftists that had newly discovered the potentials of ecology to deepen an anti-establishment critique of capitalist society. In spite of the political and organizational resources that some of these initiatives counted upon, they did not achieve much success.

By the mid 1980s, the panorama of environmental participation in party politics was confined to the self-called *Movimento Ecologista Português-Partido 'Os Verdes'* (Portuguese



Ecological Movement - The Green Party). Although lacking any grass roots support and wide membership, the party consistently maintained a seat in parliament by entering the Communist Party coalition lists. Members of 'The Green' also occupied seats in several local government assemblies, and the communists later agreed also on a seat in the European Parliament. However, due to the sponsorship of the Communists and the hostility of the environmental association field, their parliamentarians were hardly identified by other Parliamentarians, the ecologist milieu, or the public opinion, as a true representative of the environmental movement in parliament. The party hardly achieved to receive an image of independence from the Communist Party. Only the personal charisma and high appraisal ascribed to public performance of a few party members that were seated in parliament allowed the party to be given some public relevance. In 1988 they obtained better ranks in electoral lists from their coalition allies. As a result, they later received two seats in the national parliament and another one in the European Parliament.

Even so, dissension between the so-called «ecologist» and «pro-Communist» factions suddenly emerged. The reiterated orthodoxy of the Communists even after the *perestroika* wave increasingly turned into a political embarrassment for 'The Greens'. In 1990, the «ecologist» faction, which had been questioning the coalition and organizational links with the communists, abandoned the party. The striving for changes towards a new political identity for the party drove factions to split. These links were finally recognized as the main cause of public and political discredit affecting the party.

Under the leadership of the European parliamentarian, the group of dissidents even tried to organize the presentation of a «green» candidate to presidential elections. Long-time independent ecologists and environmentalists, including some «old» activists from the association milieu and far left-wing parties were invited to join the candidature. They initially received some support for the initiative from a lot of these groups, which they assembled in a 'meeting of ecologists'. The name of the European parliamentarian of the party was then most cited as the potential candidate, taking advantage of her public and political prestige. However, the candidature did not take place. For many reasons, a lot of independent ecologists declined invitations to participate, fearing the negative impact of organizational and political links of the

Green Party dissidents. In any case, this debate culminated with the desertion of the «ecologist» faction, leaving the party definitely in the hands of Communist Party followers.

Although not formally blocking individual members' participation in initiatives promoting 'green' candidatures or other forms of participation in electoral campaigns, most associations refused to enter 'green' party politics as groups. On the other side, political ecologists insisted on neglecting the contribution of associational action to the ecological cause, further blaming associations of collaborating with the political establishment. However, they repeatedly failed in joining forces and resources to move forward, particularly in electoral campaigns for the presidency of the republic and the parliament. Moreover, they showed unable to organize themselves to carry out any kind of protest action or for participating in public debates over stringent environmental issues that were increasingly rising in public and political agendas.

Benefiting from the inability of ecologists to participate in party politics, small radical-left parties often appeared in electoral campaigns under the the political ecology banner. This was particularly the case of the small Revolutionary Socialist Party, which had its roots in trotskyist groups of the mid to late 1970s. The group gradually converted with non-negligible success to ideas and issues that were the banner of «new» social movement groups worldwide, such as ecology, women's liberation, pacifism, anti-racism, minority right issues, etc.

Another attempt of the kind came from another small party, also pertaining to the communist sphere of influence, which it had recently abandoned. Striving for political survival after abandoning the Communist Party political umbrella, this small party started contacting the Rainbow Group in Strasbourg and The Greens in Germany in search for support to appear under the 'green' banner in elections (Pimenta et al. 1993: 138; Rosa 1990: 61; and Marques 1987: 12). This happened once any success, and the party suddenly disappeared from the political scene.

In 1990-91, after failing to launch the ecologist candidature to the presidency of the republic, a few dissidents of the *Movimento Ecologista Português*-'*Partido Os Verdes*' tried another formula to push for the participation of political ecologists in party politics. Resorting to the network of connections they had established with independent ecologists involved in previous meetings, they decided to start by forming a small group for reflection, which they defined as a sort of political platform with very open and broad programatic orientations apt to starting

negotiations and debates that would drive participation of ecologists in conventional mainstream parties' electoral lists for next elections. This endeavour had particularly in view the Socialist Party. They called the group *Lista de Intervenção Ecológica* (List for Ecological Participation). In the long run, a party organization was in perspective. Among this network of independent ecologists there were members of small leftist parties that had recently split, participants of all recent attempts to 'greening' small leftist parties, and activists that in the late 1970s and early 1980s had been in the front of anti-nuclear battles. Finally, there were members of environmental associations too, who saw participation in green party politics as a valuable complement of associational activism.

However, attempts to create a «new» 'green party' has only been successful in 1993. This time the promoters of the initiative primarily included the group of ecologists that had abandoned the Monarchic Party and other pioneers of the late 1970's anti-nuclear fights. Other experienced pioneers that remained apart from associations also reappeared as promoters of the new party.

The first challenge the new party faced was participation in local elections of December 1993. Efforts were made to congregate individuals and groups of ecologists spread out all over the country, either with or without links to local associations. The aim was to present autonomous candidatures in as many electoral districts as possible. The congregation of ecologists at the local level aimed also to give rise to the basic organizational structure of the party. The leadership was thought to function as a sort of supra-coordination of activities and political action at the national level, but not empowered to decide by itself about political strategy and programatic orientations.

Aiming to enlarge the political scope of the party, efforts were also made to gather people beyond the ecological milieu. The organizers intended to also mobilize party-independent citizens involved in local politics or in local heritage protection activities. Full autonomy was guaranteed to groups formed at the local or regional level. The idea was to make the party a kind of federation without a strict definition of political orientations and goals, in order to congregate all kinds of local action groups that were mobilizing on either environmental or local issues. In this way, the new 'green party' promoters aimed at enlarging the field of recruitment to ex-members of small left-wing parties that had recently split, and to dissidents of mainstream left-wing parties, both presumably potential bystanders of green politics.

In spite of this, promoters of the new party found it difficult to gather 5,000 subscribers necessary for formalities of party registration in court, but they achieved to present candidates to a lot of municipalities and parishes. In the electoral district of Lisbon the new *Partido da Terra* (Party of the Earth) presented about 200 candidates in autonomous lists for several posts of local government and district assemblies. Candidates included the ex-monarchic leader for the presidency of the local government in Lisbon, and a well-known professor of the Technical University of Lisbon, who had been a notable participant of anti-nuclear debates in the late 1970s. Nationwide electoral scores were very deceiving, but there were enough votes to elect the aforementioned professor for the assembly of the municipality of Lisbon, a post he later ran with startling public impact. Against most expectations, the ex-monarchic leader obtained only 0.4 per cent of votes.

In spite of unsuccessful electoral scores, the Party of the Earth called all affiliate groups, members, and bystanders for a meeting in March 1994. The meeting aimed at approving programmatic principles and internal statutory rules, which were aimed at conciliating the principles established by the law for party organizations with a decentralized, less formal organizational structure. In the programmatic orientations approved, however, one could find the influence of traditional and conservative values inherited from the ecologist faction that had abandoned the Monarchic Party. Still without too much success, the party was present for the next elections for the European parliament, and after failing to form a coalition with the remaining Monarchic Party, it unsuccessfully appeared with autonomous candidates in a lot of electoral districts for the national parliament the elections of 1995.

From then on the Party of the Earth did not have much visibility, nor politic impact either. Its small electoral support and marginal, extra-parliamentary status made it less attractive to the media and the other parties, in spite of having some notable and celebrated leaders the previous years' environmental politics. Moreover, the fact of not having the support of most influential and well-established environmental associations -- which the public and the media now called the «environmentalists» to distinguish from the so-called «greens» of both Green Parties -- made it hard for the 'The Party of the Earth' to rise above a marginal status within the political public sphere. Being a party organization, access to insitutional policy-making processes was not ruled

by the same criteria and legal framework applied to associations. It had to be mediated by parliamentary politics, provide the party got a post therein through elections.

Actually the weak electoral scores and the Party of the Earth's electoral campaigns represented the inescapable fading out of 'green party' politics. Its influence in environmental politics remained inevitably low, particularly in comparison to a set of associations, whose political influence in environmental issue arenas, weight in policy-making spheres of the environmental domain, expertise means, and communicational skills to impose issue-frames and strive for issue-definitions in the public sphere made them powerful actors of environmental politics.

### **7.3. Phenomenology and organizational resources of environmental groups**

In order to explain some group organization features and patterns of interorganizational interaction within the environmental movement, I will now focus on some features of the movement «industry». A short overview of organizational resources, environmental orientations, strategy of action, and of some elements of their phenomenology is provided. Special emphasis will be placed on some organizational and membership features, resource mobilization activities, and issue orientation, drawing upon a set of data about organizations.

The association sector of the environmental movement in Portugal by the early to mid 1990s was likely to be composed of small, mostly single-issue, non-political oriented groups. They were randomly dispersed over the territory, acting essentially at local level. As a counterpoint, there was also a small group of well organized, resourceful, and influential organizations, mobilizing on policy issues at the national level, which counted upon large constituency and, in some cases, hundreds of active membership. In general, they were all financially supported by the volunteers themselves -- either active members or contributing constituency -- and by subsidies for nature protection and conservation activities made available by state agencies, European Union programs, and, occasionally, by local administrations. Less often, fund contributions also came from private firms and foundations, although a law exempting

taxation of fund allocation to non-profit activities, which covered several domains of culture and historical heritage recovering, was not extensive to nature conservation.

Given the obvious weaknesses of the organizational frame performed by local level associations, they were much more dependent upon subsidies made available by local administrations, although the access to funds from central administration environmental agencies after the mid 1980s made them more autonomous and apt to act as a critical opposition to local politics establishment. Local associations often combined interests on different kinds of local issues in a broad conception of local heritage protection activities, which included cultural, historical, and natural heritage. They also hosted recreational activities for young people.

Actually, at local and regional levels, dozens of groups were active in nature and heritage conservation which, though lacking influence on local or regional level administrations dealing with environmental and development policy issues, gained remarkable organizational stability after the mid 1980s. Their contribution to propaganda and mobilization on nature conservation activities at the local level is widely recognized. Access to fund grants and technical support from central state agencies highly contributed to the stabilization of their organizational arrangements, and for their autonomy and independence regarding local governments.

At the national level, and apart the confederation, a couple of associations had reached a status that allowed them to be more regularly consulted about environmental policy issues by state actors (Pimenta et al. 1993: 155). Some groups that initially had this status, opted to for an ambiguous «inside and outside» stand regarding the new legal framework of institutionalization and participation of environmental associations launched by the state in the mid to late 1980s. As a consequence of their awkward stand, they split and declined for lack of alternative fundraising opportunities and of capacity to attract new membership. This was, particularly, the case of the group *Os Amigos da Terra*, which was still very active by the late 1980s.

In general, however, most groups that steadily established regular connections with state agencies of the environmental policy field stabilized organizational structures and regular activities, further strengthening their means of resource mobilization and autonomous fundraising. Nowadays, many of them are well-known by the public and the media.

Other kinds of associations must also be highlighted. In the first place, associations that despite being primarily professional or expertise-exclusive, showed a strong bias to participate in public debates and policy issue arenas where environmental and nature conservation issues were at stake. Apart from these kinds of professional and expert «interest groups», there were others which had a long history of following non-environmental specific interests and orientations. However, they had in the meantime adapted and updated their issue interest frames, activities, and discourse to the current environmental mood, while pursuing more or less the same kinds of civic, educational, and recreational activities.

By the late 1980s, before the *INAMB* had made a reckoning of all association groups of the environmental field, Garcia (1989) reported the existence of about 300 citizen groups in some way directly or indirectly linked to nature protection. This number sounds now somewhat exaggerated, even thinking on a non-restrictive and wider definition of environmental groups. Many were simply interested in historical heritage protection or archeology. Others were dedicated mainly to open-air sports and recreational activities for young people. The groups more influenced by the environmental and nature conservation mood were mainly single issue or site-oriented, and often were launched around an environmental section of a local periodical or a weekly broadcasting programme in local radio stations (Fernandes 1983: 19). Some started off as no more than a simple environmental section within sport or cultural associations. Others first formed as high school environmental nuclei. The cultural sector of local administrations appeared very often involved in launching these kinds of groupings. Most of these groups had very specific mobilization interests, which mainly centred on local surroundings. Some others had simply a post-box number as headquarters, or had come into existence because of a circumstantial issue, later disappearing with it.

This field of *proto*-associations, spontaneous, and often 'naive' environmentalism may be seen as the seeds of important changes occurring within the environmental movement by the mid 1980s. It represented an important background of recruitment for an emerging wave of new environmental associations, either locally or with brands nationwide, which emerged autonomously and independently of former activism and militancy of the 1970s ecologist, alternative, and leftist milieus. Although resorting to a widely comprehensive definition of

environmental associations, the new institutional framework established by the law for environmental associations was somewhat selective for the association field. In order to have access either to funds and support from the state or to rights of participation ascribed by the law, it was necessary that associations and groups had minimal organization stability, which implied at least legal statutory rules registered in court and enough expertise to elaborate and carry out convincing activities that state agencies thought as deserved funding.

Thereby, a «new generation» of environmentalists, with university degrees in natural sciences, biology, ecology, environmental engineering, natural resources management, energy, and other scientific branches started «invading» the membership, and leadership, of environmental associations. By generation, expertise, and political and social experience, this «new wave» of environmentalists showed deeply different from previous self-taught activists, whose militancy had been nurtured by the wave of leftism and alternative cultures of most environmental activism of the 1970s. Opposite to the 1970's «pioneers», this «new» associational activism did not see participation in environmental associations as a «way of life», as a driving impulse of one's beliefs, or as a moral, altruistic duty; but much more as a means to participate in public life in accordance to skills, knowledge, and expertise obtained from the university. Often, adhering to environmental associations was even a practical way of pursuing field research activities after graduation at a university.

Only until the early 1980s was it common that young environmental activists came from previous militancy within the student movement and «new-left» activism. Both declined after 1977, the former changing its focus to university issues, the latter being reduced to a couple of small, though well-organized groups that either concentrated in trade-union mobilization activities or just re-emerged campaigning every time there were elections. After the mid 1980s, environmental group activists often had university degrees, or were still university students following courses connected with the environmental field. In local associations, high school teachers served as important civil entrepreneurs of environmental collective action. Many young people adhered to the environmental cause after fighting against local pollution issues, or after recreational and school experiences in local ecological sites. Some of them started in groups for local heritage protection, or specialized on environment and nature conservation themes in local



or school periodicals and radio stations. Very often they were aware of environmental problems after a conference run by an association leader, by a teacher in high school, or by one of the pioneers. The age cohort of 15 to 25 years old clearly prevailed among activists of environmental organizations, and people older than 25 years old could only be found in the leadership and directive councils of organizations. Thus, the majority of activists of the mid to late 1980s were too young to have experienced militancy in far-left organizations or in the student movement boom of the 1970s (Fernandes 1983:p.19).

It has to be said that these kinds of changes in membership also affected associations traditionally more focused on expertise constituency, which made even the *Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (LPN)* break away from its traditionally more reserved, backstage stand. Changes occurred in both the organizational structure and membership of the group, which started participating more often in public debates on environmental issues (Pimenta et al. 1993: 151). The *LPN* is, in fact, a unique case in Portugal. It is widely recognized as a prestigious pioneer association even inside the scientific, university 'milieu' and in the administration. The past of this group is also rich in collaborations with international environmental groups and agencies. In the late 1980s it had about 3,000 constituents and its working groups carried out diverse activities of research and environmental education in universities and high schools. Its model had inspired other organizations emerging by the early 1980s (Garcia 1989: 14).

The *Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e do Ambiente (GEOTA)*, originally a research centre formed by a group of young economists, engineers, and energy experts, was founded in 1981. The group specialized very early in problems not yet very common in the field, such as environmental impact assessment studies, economic tools for energy planning, noise control, transports, territory planning, environmental law (Pimenta et al. 1993: 151-3). The *GEOTA* first developed partly due to a cooperation agreement with the *Instituto Para a Social Democracia* (Garcia 1989: 14), which was an institute founded by the Social Democratic Party for political staff formation. Two state secretaries for the environment and natural resources of the mid 1980s Social Democratic cabinets had been founders of this group. The *GEOTA* is said to have pioneered the principles of «sustainable development» in Portugal. The early adhesion of *GEOTA* to the «sustainable development» discourse provided the group a lot of credibility within

state actors and right-wing parties. The discourse frames first proclaimed by *GEOTA* provided then a more moderate and well-sustained approach to environmental issues in alternative to anti-industrialism and anti-capitalism of political ecology discourse dominant in environmental protest groups of the 1970s.

On the other hand, *GEOTA* was also eager for a more pragmatic strategy for the environmental movement in Portugal, directly pressuring authorities and the administration in order to improve efficiency and impact of the group action, instead of the usual practice of systematic, radical criticism against, and rupture with, the system. Thus, it halted the systematic mistrust towards dialogue and collaboration with the administration (Pimenta et al. 1993: 152-3), a strategy also openly promoted by governmental actors of the environmental policy sector of the mid 1980s led by a young state secretary of environment and natural resources who was himself a founder of the *GEOTA*.

The group *Quercus - Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza* was founded in 1986 by a group of conservationists from several small environmental organizations involved in bird conservation activities. It later absorbed other small, local groups, further becoming the biggest environmental organization according to constituency, active membership, and number of delegations nationwide. It was also the first group to shape its organizational structure upon a sort of regional nuclei federation, which allowed participation in debates over environmental issues raised at local, regional, and national levels. The association often resorted to spectacular actions inspired by Greenpeace (Pimenta et al. 1993: 152; and Garcia 1989: 15-7). *Quercus* occasionally collaborated with this group in protest actions carried out inside the national territory.

*Quercus* played an important role in enlarging the scope of action of the environmental movement in Portugal in the late 1980s. In 1989 it had about 2,300 members, with nuclei in 14 towns nationwide. It first received the attention of the public in 1986 with a campaign for the protection of the vulture, after which they created a special area for bird feeding in the region where vultures still live. *Quercus* kept attracting very young people. Since the beginning it provided organizational resources for protection and nature conservation activities that are very attractive to youngsters, such as the census of white storks, monitoring birds of prey and migratory bird sites, etc. Its activities in 1989-91 included dozens of projects of the kind, further

striving for the creation of new areas of natural reserves. Observers also stressed the professionalism and scientific rigour shown by the group in publications and public performance, which was seen as a pioneer effort to step away from amateurism prevalent in 1970's environmental militancy (Garcia 1989; and Gomes 1991).

The association '*Os Amigos da Terra*' was still very active in the mid to late 1980s, but started declining thereafter. Internal dissension and frequent quarrels about cooperation with state actors are said to have blocked the growth of this organization, which was more oriented towards street protest, petition campaigns, demonstrations, and political biased participation. The group pioneered links with international groups, particularly with 'Friends of the Earth', whose name the group uses in the equivalent Portuguese version. It was said that the group reached around 11,000 constituents by the early to mid 1980s (Garcia 1989: 15), which seems rather exaggerated number. The active membership was surely lower. Most constituency did not participate in group activity, nor did it contribute regularly to the groups's economy.

By the late 1980s, Portuguese environmental associations started decisively paying more attention to developing organizational skills and organizing their activities in a more professional way (Garcia 1989: 15). There were even of dissension over whether to organize groups according to the principles of voluntary service or following a professional model. However, most work kept being done by volunteers, although occasionally specific research tasks were given to professionals from outside the organization (*ibid.*; and Gomes 1991). Funding had always been the main problem. Regular money came only from rather small constituency. By the early 1990s, the *LPN* was the only organization to have accumulated a significative patrimony in more than 45 years of existence. In most cases, funds were mainly for field research and educational projects sponsored by international groups, (e.g. International Federation Friends of the Earth, and World Wildlife Fund), by national state agencies, and EU environmental programs. Occasionally, funds also came from local governments, particularly in the case of locally based associations or when bigger associations involved in nature conservation of ecological sites located in the territory of local districts (Pimenta et al.: 152).

Between 1987 and 1994, more than 60 per cent of environmental associations registered at the *INAMB/IPAMB* had at least one project funded by the *INAMB/IPAMB*. About 26 per cent

received funds from the *INAMB/IPAMBt* three or more times in the period (see next Table 1). This had highly contributed to the stabilization of organizational structures of many associations, although some of them did not reach the minimum level of constituency in order to be officially recognized as, at least, «local associations». Since this requirement of the law hardly fit with the characteristics of the environmental movement «industry» in Portugal, the association status was not made determinant for allocation of fund resources. The state agency authorities and other participants of decision making over the allocation of funds to associations -- which also included representatives of the associations -- opted for funding criteria that concerned the consistency of projects and organizational stability of groups. In this case, they neglected the formal status of groups according to the law of environmental associations.

An introductory analysis of the universe of environmental associations allows to give an account on some characteristics of the environmental «industry» highlighted so far, such as issue orientation, heterogeneity, distribution over the territory, area of intervention, membership size, year of foundation, and so on (See Table 1). The table also reflects some features of the changes experienced by the movement in the mid 1980s. In Table 1 associations are aggregated into two main categories, depending on whether they mobilize exclusively on environmental issues or not. The first category includes three main groups of environmental associations: (1) Associations mobilizing on a wide range of environmental and nature conservation issues and having particular vocation for more frequent propaganda activity and participation in public debates over environmental policy issues; (2) Associations that mainly focus on protection and conservation of special natural sites, which ultimately defines their main area of intervention as local or regional, and other single-issue oriented groups, whose area of intervention is, thereby, usually nationwide; (3) Other kinds of organizations, mainly professional or expert-exclusive, whose activity is directly connected with environmental and nature conservation issues (e.g. the Association of Environmental Engineers, the Portuguese Association of Biologists, and so on). In this case, environmental activities, propaganda actions, scientific research, and participation in public debates on nature protection and conservation issues have some primacy over the promotion and regulation of the profession.

Table 1 - Localization, Area of Intervention, Year of Foundation, Membership, Funds from INAMB/IPAMB (between 1987-94), and Orientation of Environmental Associations in Portugal (1995).

See titles a) to g)	Exclusively Environmental Oriented		Non-Exclusively Environmental Oriented		Total	
	value	(%)	value	(%)	value	(%)
a) Localization-Town Size						
1- Lisbon/Oporto	23	(26)	14	(23)	37	(25)
2- Mid-size town	22	(25)	15	(25)	37	(25)
3- Small town	42	(48)	32	(52)	74	(50)
b) Localization-Region (I)						
1 - North/Centre	37	(43)	27	(44)	64	(43)
2 - Lisbon/Tagus Valley	34	(39)	26	(43)	60	(41)
3 - South and Islands	16	(18)	8	(13)	24	(16)
c) Localization-Region (II)						
1 - Littoral Regions	68	(78)	51	(84)	119	(80)
2 - Interior Regions	16	(18)	9	(15)	25	(17)
3 - Islands	3	(3)	1	(2)	4	(3)
d) Area of Intervention						
1 - Nationwide	23	(26)	12	(20)	35	(24)
2 - Regional	21	(24)	16	(26)	37	(25)
3 - Local	43	(50)	33	(54)	76	(51)
e) Year of Foundation						
1 - Before 1974	3	(3)	2	(3)	5	(3)
2 - 1974-1984	15	(17)	30	(49)	45	(30)
3 - 1985-1995	69	(79)	29	(48)	98	(66)
f) Membership (I)						
1 - Less than 200	40	(46)	17	(28)	57	(39)
2 - 200 to 1,000	32	(37)	40	(65)	72	(49)
3 - 1 000 to 4, 000	10	(11)	1	(2)	11	(7)
4 - More then 4,000	2	(2)	3	(5)	5	(3)
5 - No information	3	(3)	-	-	3	(2)
g) Membership (II)						
Total Membership	[40 492]	(26)	[114 268] (a)	(74)	[154 760]	(100)
h) Funds from INAMB/IPAMB						
1 - Never received	35	(40)	20	(33)	55	(37)
2 - 1 to 2 times	29	(33)	25	(41)	54	(36)
3 - 3 to 4 times	15	(17)	12	(20)	27	(18)
4 - 5 to 7 times	8	(9)	4	(6)	12	(8)
Total	87	(59)	61	(41)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

(a) This number includes two associations that declared respectively 60,000 and 32,000 members. The first is the *Corpo Nacional de Escutas* ('National Scouts'), which is a nationwide association run by the Catholic Church and dedicated to recreational and educational activities for young people. The second is the *Centro Português de Cicloturismo/Federação Portuguesa de Cicloturismo e Utilizadores de Bicicletas* ('Portuguese Federation of Bicycle Riders and Users') which had about 8 000 individual members and 450 federate groups. In the membership number declared to the INAMB/IPAMB all members of the federate groups were included.

These categories define the horizon of associations that may fall under the label of environmental groups in a strict sense. The others compose a heterogeneous set of associations non-exclusively oriented to environmental issues in this narrow sense, covering essentially a wide range of locally-based associations carrying on volunteer activities of research, conservation, and the recovering of local heritage in the fields of local history, archeology, ethnography, traditional architecture, and landscape.

We saw in Chapter 4 how this group of associations configured a major and widely successful association movement, starting by the early 1980s and mobilizing on historical and cultural heritage protection issues. By the late 1980s, this movement of essentially local associations had not yet institutional channels for interchange with state actors of this policy sector, nor did they receive any kind of institutional support by the central state, even though they could find many incentives and support from local governments. Due to the locally-drawn framework of their activities, many of these associations literally adopted the catch-all definition of environmental associations as defined by the law for environmental associations. In this way, they had access to institutional devices and fund opportunities allowed by this law, although they essentially run activities for protection and conservation of local history and cultural heritage.

There is also a very small group of associations that are mainly oriented to local and regional development issues, and a set of others specifically drawn on cultural and recreational activities, particularly carrying on open air and civic formation activities that included educational action over nature conservation and environmental issues. In some cases, these associations simply converted to fashionable environmentalism of the mid 1980s, thereby re-framing their activities and orientation.<sup>4</sup>

Still, under the category of «non-exclusively environmental oriented» associations, one could find professional and expert-exclusive groups whose interest and topic orientation was not directly related to environmental issues, such as archeology, architecture, sociology, rural studies, etc. Their application to the *INAMB/IPAMP* was essentially a question of vantage-point to highlight their environmental-friendly bearings.

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<sup>4</sup> As an example, see the case of groups cited in footnote (a) of Table 1.

Although Table 1 does not reveal the wide heterogeneity of the environmental association field, this description gives at least a rough idea of diversity found among environmental associations. Still, Table 1 displays other important information. One may observe a high degree of dissemination of environmental movement organizations at local and regional levels, as shown in parts a) and d) of Table 1. About 75 per cent of associations are located in medium and small-sized towns, and their area of intervention is mainly local and regional. Of course, their distribution over the national territory follows the geography of economic, social, and demographic development, whose polarization into two big metropole centers, and north *versus* south or littoral *versus* interior asymmetries are very well-known. This fact is apparent in a), b) and c) of Table 1. About 80 per cent of associations are located in littoral regions, while the southern part of the country, apart from the Lisbon plus the Tagus Valley region, does not reach 20 per cent of the association universe. That is, associations are concentrated in regions that are more industrialized, urbanized, and crowded -- Lisbon and Tagus Valley, Littoral North, and Littoral Centre.

Section e) of Table 1 points out another feature of the association universe, which represents a noteworthy rupture regarding the former universe of more political ecology oriented groups of the 1970s that seemingly have disappeared. It is obviously expected that almost all current groups were founded after 1974. However, it is worthwhile to underline that about 80 per cent of the so-called «exclusively environmental oriented» associations were founded after 1985. The number for the «non-exclusively environmental oriented» groups is slightly lower, due to precedence of the historical heritage protection association «boom» over the environmental protection and nature conservation «mood» of the mid 1980s.

Sections d) and f) of Table 1 show how inadequate were the numbers concerning association membership the legislator opted for in the law for environmental associations in order to differentiate local, regional and national associations. While only half of the associations are in reality locally oriented -- the other half being equally distributed between regional and national as shown in Table 1, Section d) -- the membership of about 40 per cent of associations did not reach the minimum of 200 members required by the law for local associations. Moreover, only a very small group of 6 associations had enough membership to aspire into the category of national

associations defined by the law. Actually, about 80 per cent of associations had less than 500 members. The legislator seemed, thus, to have had a very optimistic view of the environmental association «boom» of the mid to late 1980'. In any case, membership of environmental associations was undoubtedly small. The average for those I called «exclusively environmental oriented» was less than 500 members.<sup>5</sup>

Actually the law for environmental associations, which passed by unanimity in the parliament in 1987, had highly contributed for the current configuration and features of the environmental association movement. First of all, since the law was very demanding in terms of membership, only a small group of associations reached to be fully recognized as 'social partners' at the high level of state administration and policy-making structures, thereby having the challenge of enlarging their influence and constituency.

Furthermore, after a few years of mainly educational and leisure activities of nature conservation, most associations were unskilled and lacked all kinds of resources -- funds, skilled membership, organizational resources, technical and scientific expertise, etc. -- necessary to fully participate in advisory bodies dominated by experts and officials of several policy sectors of the administration. Many local associations applied to legal formalities in order to benefit from public funding for pursuing their small conservation activities at the local level. Others, however, decided to integrate larger organizations which lacked a network of constituency and activists covering the whole country.

At the national level, the more political-oriented groups refused to «collaborate with power» and started declining. Others, which had been recently established as voluntary associations for field activity on nature conservation issues, seemed to be more prepared. The access to funding from state agencies contributed for stabilization of many groups, which further developed organizational means in order to guarantee permanent funding raising from other sources too.

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<sup>5</sup> Of course the average value is much higher for the whole universe, mainly due to two associations that declared to have respectively 60,000 and 32,000, which makes about 60 per cent of the total membership of associations registered at the *IPAMB*, as referred to in footnote (a) of Table 1.



#### **7.4. Associations' communication strategy in the public sphere of environmental politics**

By the late 1980s, participation of environmental movement organizations in policy-making arenas, according to conditions demanded by the law for environmental associations, was still beyond current capacity of many groups. Only three skilled associations, which were emerging as the «vanguard» of the movement and receiving public recognition, were able to drive a wide network of activists apt to fully participate in environmental politics. They gradually took the lead of environmental protest.

Permanent contact devices of collaboration were established among them to guarantee full representation of the movement in agencies and advisory bodies where associations were allowed to have representatives. This was naturally followed by common action in public campaigns over more stringent issues. Direct participation in public debates, which they often showed able to launch, and collaboration in EU Programs and in large educational and propaganda campaigns allowed for developing a comprehensive framework of dialogue, interchange, mutual collaboration, but also fruitful competition among them. This framework of interchange and collaboration imposed a strategy for maximizing the impact of both common and autonomous protest actions, while following, and simultaneously benefiting from, conditions allowed by the law for environmental associations. This strategy may be depicted from a set of basic orientations which associations revealed in many circumstances concerning organizational, economic, political, and communicational dimensions of interaction with the political environment.

Only in the case of the *LPN*, group identity was based upon a past rich of militancy and organizational roots for the sake of the cause. However, the last few times revealed that there were a lot of organizational and ideological similarities among these leading groups. Slight differences in issue interest and distinct organizational strategies maintained autonomy and sustained independence concerning mobilization and conduct. All this led to tacitly agreeing over a sort of «division of labour» that followed and strengthened original vocation and issue specialization of each association. For instance, *GEOTA* kept giving particular emphasis to energy, industrial wastes, and territory planning issues, while the group *Quercus* developed skills in fauna and natural habitats conservation, fresh water pollution, and spectacular protest actions

over some momentous issues-events. The *LPN* remained faithful to its original, more reserved stand, privileging scientific field research activity far from the public eye, with particular emphasis on natural flora conservation and sea pollution problems.

Since it resulted mainly from strategic options autonomously decided by each group, this «division of labour» did not mean exclusiveness in selected fields. Particularly, the steadfast growing of the group *Quercus* by the early 1990s and its style of action would lead the group to enlarge the scope of issue interest. Nor was it based upon any kind of formal agreement undertaken by associations. But it highly contributed to improve both rewards of fund allocation and technical and scientific performances of associations in public and expertise arenas of environmental politics. It also facilitated and enhanced the developing of international connections, mainly at EU centers.

Resorting to all kinds of funding facilities available, which state agencies, EU programs, private foundations, and even big firms increasingly were making accessible, groups improved professional skills, and technical and scientific expertise of active membership. Further organizational resources also led the way to new forms of fundraising as an alternative to volunteer contributions by the constituency, membership fees, and state agency subsidies. Associations found that, once they were rigorous about their independence, their knowledge and information resources could be also a source of fundraising, particularly serving as environmental advisers for public and private agents.

The same principle was applied to maintaining strict independence regarding political parties and the government. Associations achieved to define their own field of action and autonomy. They never discussed political issues or participated in other kinds of public debates than those strictly related to the environmental field. Therefore, they made independence from parties and the government compatible with collaboration with political actors, provided environmental issues for the «public interest» were at stake. The rule was to make the most of participation channels for the sake of improving environmental performances of the economy and society, and to strongly oppose any public or private agents evading environmental laws. This made pressing and collaborating with authorities -- eventually with public prosecutors too --

compatible. Whatever the case, complaining to EU authorities about irregularities committed by state actors regarding environmental directives became vital to protest actions.

This stand also avoided direct compromise with local Nimby movements, except for cases of local protest movements led by well-established associations and arguing on the basis of alternative, environmental-friendly technical solutions and not over individualistic, neighborhood interests regarding location aspects of the issue.

By strictly assuming environmental protection and nature conservation as «public interest», environmental issues could be defended and communicated as non-negotiable by principle. Intransigence was counterbalanced by disposition to collaboration and participation in common efforts to find the best solutions. Efforts were also made to be present in every kind of public and institutional arena where environmental policy issues were under debate, and always make the public know their stand on environmental issues discussed in restricted institutional arenas.

The improvement of professional skills and technical and scientific expertise also allowed associations to make their discourse, opinions, and proposals over concrete policy issues to be supported by well-founded scientific and technical data. Moreover, this small group of associations still managed to appear in agreement over most important issues, which more often than not were previously debated among them. Actually, they rarely appeared to disagree in front of the public, the media, or the government, although divergence and rivalries existed.

Of course, there was no kind of formal agreement between associations where one can explicitly find these principles, though some punctual agreements were often established. However, as far as my research allows to bear, these basic orientations were tacitly accepted and followed by this small group of associations which, by the mid 1990s, emerged as the most active and influential in the public sphere of environmental politics. Associations following these principles were effectively gaining the recognition of the public, media, politicians, experts, firms, interest groups, local and central administrations, and central state authorities.

The media played a very important role in producing such a credible and positive image of environmental groups. When environmental events and issues started becoming a news item, the search for information first led journalists to officials of the administration. However, they

suddenly discovered that environmentalists were not only very well informed about what was happening in the terrain, but that they also owned technical knowledge about the issues. Thus, when journalists found obstacles in gathering information and comprehensive explanations on issues from officials and experts of the administration, they definitely turned to associations. Total availability of associations to media requests was a sort of tacit trade-off between the movement and the media, associations guaranteeing information and expertise, and the media giving wide visibility to associations and environmental discourse. In any case, it highly contrasted with the behaviour of environmental authorities, which by the early 1990s restricted direct contacts of officials of the environmental sector with journalists and reporters (Valente 1994).

Actually, in the early 1990s, when environmental issues began to reach higher status in public and media agendas, the minister decided to halt informal channels linking the media and the environmental administration. The minister complained about contradictory information coming from within the ministry, realizing that information flowing out from the ministry without previous political control had boomerang effects. Thus, a high level official was nominated to handle all contacts between the ministry and the press, making it more difficult to obtain quick and expert information on environmental issues (*ibid.*). So journalists definitely turned to environmental associations for information and expert details about environmental issues, until associations and their initiatives became 'news' themselves.

It has to be said that only after the mid 1980s did daily and weekly periodicals begin to pay regular attention to environmental issues and environmental protest events. The same may be said about radio and TV channels too, whose opening to private broadcasting originated an intense competition for audiences. Although TV programs exclusively dedicated to environmental issues in any of the four TV channels remained rare, news programs particularly focusing on regional social and economic development problems became an important 'screen' where associations could perform.

Another circumstance helped making environmentalists 'media-friendly'. By the early 1990s journalists in charge of environmental issues in newspapers' agendas often lacked expertise in the field. They mostly came from, or ran simultaneously, other news sections and were self-

taught in the environmental domain (*ibid.*). Environmental associations offered them an outstanding alternative as a source of news and expertise.

Interconnections between media agents and the association field was also a good indicator of a broad consensus in both opinion makers and the public not only over the increasing attention paid to environmental issues within the country, but also of the important role associations were playing in the early 1990s in this cultural change effecting the public, and political and economic actors over environmental issues. The wise performance of environmental groups was also important. They were able to escape the utopian «leftist» image of the old days and to come closer to a recognizable stand of attentive and expert «guardians» of the environment for the sake of «public interest».

A wise approach of environmental associations to scientific knowledge and expertise made them also well-accepted within the expertise milieu. Associations started to send representatives to debates on environmental issues organized by universities and scientific research agencies. In these arenas, associations' members not only were zealous in performing the high demanding scientific skills necessary to enter debates, but they were also at ease with procedure rules and rituals of the 'milieu'. Since many activists graduated in, or were students of, natural sciences, physics, chemistry, etc., it was not surprise that group leaders are often young professors in universities.

When the public sphere of environmental politics was shaped in the 1990s as essentially an «expertise domain», that is, made by, and for, experts in environmental issues, associations showed, thus, well-prepared to act in consonance with this tendency. They were mostly non-political oriented and payed special attention to scientific and technical features of issues. This is why it can be said that environmental politics was turning into a predominantly cultural and non-political public space. Green political organizations never succeeded in bringing environmental policy issues to the center stage of political action. Mainstream parties tended to marginalize environmental issues from the core of important political debates, and delegated participation in environmental issue debating to a very few specialists in the field. Actually, apart from electoral campaigns and some debates over more appealing issues, environmental policy domain was left free from party rivalries. Governmental and state actors of this field found this small, though very

active, sector of environmental associations playing the «opposition» role within the environmental policy domain.

I have already remarked how attempts to avoid the politicization of this policy field failed. By the early 1990s, ministers in charge of the portfolio of environment and natural resources changed three times, either by failing in this strategy or by lacking political skills to deal with the contradictions of this policy domain. In part, it was due to associations that the environmental policy field did not effectively close as a purely state-centred, non-public, and essentially an expert policy domain. Another factor may, of course, be found in recent environmental legislation which, being highly influenced by EU environmental directives, was very demanding not only in terms environmental performance targets of the economy and society but also in participation devices for the public and non-state actors.

Within these conditions, associations made of their independence from party politics, and self-improvement in expertise and skilled resources the keystone of their strategy. First of all, this meant a public image of trustworthy volunteer groups with high expertise in environmental issues. Intransigence concerning party politics, 'green' parties included, meant essentially two different things: that they would not involve in political debates or issues which were not clearly environmentally related; and that they strictly limited their initiatives and activities in political or policy affairs to the environmental sector or to other policy sectors' issues with visible impact upon the environment. Still, acting for the sake of the «public interest» became a master frame of environmental discourse and issue definition by the associations.

This did not necessarily mean they did not care about further political effects of their participation in the public sphere. However, their distancing from party politics and intransigence in face of the «politics of interests» that started taking place in institutional arenas within the sphere of the state, shows how communication strategies used by environmental association groups aimed ultimately at broader cultural effects, independent of further political consequences resulting from their action.

A short overview of the most significant frames involving conflicting perceptions of relationships of environment *versus* modernization as applied to particular conditions of the country, and which opposed environmental groups against developers in the early to mid 1990s,

may be seen as a useful tool for analysing both political and cultural dimensions of public debates on environmental issues resulting from the communication strategy and political standing of environmental associations. These frames do not only express different cultural meanings and rationalities appearing as a framework of moral and rational justifications, which emerged in the public sphere with reference to concrete issues, but they also portrayed different definitions of political interests at stake. Tables 2-4 reproduce a preliminary attempt to describe a few of these frames.

Table 2 - Conflicting perceptions of environment *versus* modernization in public debates in Portugal (I). Political discourse frames of environmental groups and governmental developers concerning environmental policy issues.

Environmental group frames	Economic modernization frames
Government and industry are in collusion to promote development by delaying costs of environmental care.	Government and industry are the main actors of modernization and have to agree upon political and developing objectives for the nation.
Hegemony of bureaucracy and industrialist expertise within the administrative system encourage progress with environmental harm.	Government acts in the public interest. Expertise of state administration agencies is a guarantor of environmental performances of policy making.
Independent expertise should be called in technological risky and environment harmful decision making.	Self-sufficiency of administration experts is a guarantee of efficiency in decision making.
Participation of non-governmental groups in every step of policy decision making with potential environmental impact is essential.	Participation of non-governmental groups and of the citizenry in environmental policy making is guaranteed in that they are consulted for policy decision formation and play an important role in environmental education of the public.
Environmental policy must be interdepartmental.	The internal solidarity of the government makes it responsible as a whole for any policy sector.

Two basic kinds of contrasting arguments appearing in the public sphere of environmental politics in Portugal related environmental and development issues. The absence of wide range and more stringent environmental policy making was justified by state developers as a sort of defensive strategy based upon the economic and environmental situation of the country relative to the average rates of the EU. Belonging to the group of less developed nations, Portugal was also one of the least polluting (and polluted) countries in comparison to more advanced economies. Thus, special conditions were said to have to be taken into account when the moment came for implementation of environmental EU directives.

Table 3 - Conflicting perceptions of environment *versus* modernization in public debates in Portugal (II). Political discourse frames of environmental groups and governmental developers concerning environmental impacts of economic development policy issues.

Environmental group frames	Economic modernization frames
<p>Industrialism encourages proliferation of environmental problems, thereby increasing the costs of environmental recovering in the future.</p> <p>Economic development should at least consider a more rigorous enforcement of EC environmental directives.</p> <p>The increase of the GNP in Portugal is made at the expenses of energy wasting, more pressure upon raw-materials and natural resources, and increases of urban and industrial wastes.</p> <p>The idea that economic rates come first does not fit anymore with a «modern advanced nation».</p> <p>Government should promote small (industrial, energy, infrastructures, urban, etc.) unities with less environmental impact.</p> <p>Government should protect future generations against today's environmental harm and not burden them with higher costs of environmental recovery.</p>	<p>Industrial and infrastructure development reduces national dependence and speeds convergence rates of EU nations.</p> <p>Government has to take into account «special» conditions of economic and industrial systems for the sake of the nation's interests.</p> <p>Portugal has a clean environment according to EU standards. It has the lowest rates of air pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emission by GNP or <i>per capita</i>.</p> <p>Only an affluent society is able to steadily take care of the environment.</p> <p>Government has an important regulatory function in the economy but has to give primacy to free market rules.</p> <p>Government aims to ensure future generations affluency and welfare comparable to other EU peers.</p>

This discourse converged with industries' interests, which came to the scene only to emphasize the high costs that the industry had to face in the short run to abide by demanding green rules of EU environmental directives. Environmental groups argued that governmental promises and commitments with the European Union environmental policy for pursuing a policy that gradually approached *sustainable development* principles were contradicted by every day policy making in development and environmental policy sectors.

Associations also emphasized evidence of environmental policies in other central European countries, which instead were pioneering demanding environmental policies with significant pollution reductions and simultaneously undergoing economic growth rates. For instance, governmental developers and industrials underestimated the environmentally-friendly sector's business opportunities. Furthermore, the principles that were supposed to be the foundations of modernization for environmental policy making in whichever «advanced nation» -



- it means, at least, the polluter-pays principle and the principle of prevention -- were no more than a rhetoric motto of policy-makers' discourse. Hardly they were followed as main orientation of policy-making, rather becoming dispersed in fragmented policy measures. Adding to this framing of discourses, there was still divergence over the state's role in expertise selection, and about the citizen's participation in policy-making processes, which further emphasized discursive connections of policy-making options with the functioning of democratic rules and practices.

Table 4 - Conflicting perceptions of environment versus modernization in public debates in Portugal (III). Cultural frames of environmental groups and governmental developers in political discourse concerning the role of science and expertise in dealing with environmental risks and issue resolution.

Environmental group frames	Economic-modernization frames
Scientific and technical data can be manipulated for alternative ends.	Science and technical data are neutral.
Science and technology can be a source of harm as well as of benefit.	Science contributes to progress as well as to reduce environmental harm.
The problem of acceptability of risks and environmental costs limits the value of technical evidence.	Technical evidence is the only basis on which to evaluate risks and costs of environmental harm.
Uncertainty is a qualitative not a quantitative factor of science and technology.	Experts in Portugal use the most sophisticated and advanced methods for evaluating external effects of technological systems

Finally, there is what I called the cultural frames, taking on the role of science as an exemplary domain.<sup>6</sup> Debate boundaries over this issue frame are well-known and certainly oversimplified in Table 4. They express divergent and conflicting definitions which reflect opposition of political interests when applied to concrete issues. It would also be worthwhile to pay attention to items involving different conceptions of democracy, political legitimacy, and social justice which currently also intersect many environmental debates. Actually, one of the most striking effects of environmental groups participating in the public space was the «new» framing of debates over development issues and these kinds of problems.

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<sup>6</sup> For a discussion about this issue by a former leader of the group *Quercus*, see Marques (1994: 13-53).

Although extremely simplified, this linear two-party list of opponent frames is very useful as an analytical tool to describe the manifestation of conflicting interests and ideologies by the various participants of political and public debates over environmental *versus* modernization issues in Portugal during the last years. It describes contending positions of participants in terms of purely dichotomic negative-positive attributes and problem definition. Debates in the public and political spheres always took place in a context of several problem definitions, fact relevance evaluations, and frameworks for resolution, whose ultimate generators were contending cognitive frames that allowed participants to basically orient their views and arguments.

This analysis is an exploratory attempt to typify discourses in the public sphere of environmental politics aiming to locate cultural, rather than strictly political, relevance of collective action for the sake of improving environmental protection and nature conservation in Portugal. In the end, it aims at a twofold analytic purpose. First, it allows to reverse attention from surface arguments over concrete issues to determine the essence of conflicting perceptions that ultimately generate contrasting positions over facts and issue definitions. Then, it helps to contrast the contradictory perceptions at stake in the public space of environmental politics, allowing to distinguish their different rationalities, and to predict how perceptions may change in the public space by means of the permeability of discourses about concrete issues.

## **Conclusion of Part III**

Part III thoroughly concentrated on changes and features of environmental politics and protest in Portugal the mid 1980s onwards. Some discussion is, nevertheless, due in order to emphasize the kind of interplay between the government interests -- as shaped by internal politics, as well as by EC environmental demands -- and public debates fostered by movement organizations after they entered a new step of organizational stabilization and institutionalization.

The empirical analysis of Part III gave a particular focus to the standpoint of the state in stabilizing the field of environmental politics. This included direct, though subtle, intervention into the re-structuring of the environmental movement itself. The shaping of the environmental policy field as a strategic, cross-cutting regulatory domain, whose competence interfered with other policy fields, needed political support from outside the state sphere. Therefore, environmental state actors essayed to selectively promote the moderate, though larger and better organized, part of the environmental movement. Associations received the support of the state for improving expertise resources, while permanent institutional channels of collaboration to make them participate in policy making were established. This also contributed to define this policy field as mainly an expertise domain, which the intricacy and complexity of environmental issues justified.

In some way, this kind of state action towards the environmental movement «industry» may be seen as an echo of paternalistic or protective forms of the state towards civil society relationships. Other analysts used the same words referring to similar intents of promoting and supporting the initiative of civil society in other policy fields. By means of subtle forms of supporting the organization of social interests within civil society, the state made them to abide by its own protective aureole. Thereby, the state strengthened its role in social negotiation and control by hindering the autonomization of civil society initiatives to the advantage of state centralism, which is said to be a tradition mark of political culture in Portugal.

However, my analysis of the interaction of movement organizations and the environmental policy domain opened other paths. It stressed the contribution of the environmental movement and the state to shaping public space arenas where environmental issues are culturally transformed into policy issues. This twofold analysis distinguished political and cultural processes underlying the institutionalization of environmentalism as a movement, as well as a process of stabilization of mainstream environmental convictions within the state.

The Portuguese case shows how movement and state actors within the conditions of a «late comer»/«post authoritarian» polity, come to share important and particular roles as carriers of environmentalism. Although *strictus sensus* -- and historically speaking -- one has to isolate the movement as the main carrier of environmental discourse and values, ultimately, it was by means of state action that environmentalism became relevant as a policy domain and transformed into a social practice extensive to society. Obviously, this is not new, nor is it a specific feature of environmental cultures in southern European societies or «late comer»/«post authoritarian» polities either. After all, this is why the state is usually said to be the ultimate target of environmental collective action. The course that social and political processes have taken is specific. If one accepts that internal political factors and historical circumstances do exert some influence upon the patterns, trajectory, and careers of movements at the national level, particularly, in determining political opportunities, environmental issue mobilization potentials, and organizational and mobilization resources of movements, one may better understand how and why the state came into playing a pivotal role in both the rise and institutionalization of environmentalism in Portugal.

In the case of this «late comer»/«post authoritarian», advanced society polity, environmentalism was shaped as a moderate, a-political, associational, non-mass movement, and closer to soft versions of ecological modernization mainstream discourse than to radical trends of political ecology -- which since the mid 1980s virtually disappeared from the scene, in part due to organizational inability to react to state action initiative. This may be seen as an effect of a conjunction of factors, which include historical contextual aspects, political opportunity structure ingredients, strategic political options of movement organizations, and eventually some judicious political initiatives by state actors. In particular, state actors were very wise in offering

environmental groups some kind of institutional status that regulated their public participation in the aftermath of the EEC Adhesion Treaty. The movement was caught in a transition stage. Their weakness made contributions of the state for movement organizations very welcome. From this point of view, issue debates that occurred the first years after the formalities of the EEC adhesion in 1986 clearly represent a pivotal «transition period» between the rise and institutionalization of environmentalism processes both at the movement and state level.

Thereby, movement organizations also gained enough strength and political legitimacy to play the role of the «opposition» in the field of environmental politics, for at least two reasons. First, the ecological mainstream discourse within this context was still «radical» enough to highlight practical contradictions of policy and decision making of the government. Second, mainstream opposition parties conceded from the field either by inertia, by having been caught unprepared for disputes over environmental issues, or by virtually admitting the non-priority policy status ascribed by the government to environmental policy-making. Ultimately, this gives credit to the wise strategy of governmental actors in defining the policy field as an expert, a-political domain.

Actually, it was up to the logics of the government to make the most of political mobilization and economic resources available to promote national standards of infrastructural development and affluency, and to prepare the economy and society to join the EEC as a fully-fledged participant. This is where the EEC adhesion factor came to play a twofold role, which most debates fostered by environmental organizations had the virtue to make clear. Most issues brought to debate by environmental groups aimed not at furthering the regulatory basis of economic activity for the sake of environmental protection and nature conservation, but instead concentrated on immediate environmental impacts of economic growth, territory planning, and infrastructural development. One may say that the movement tried to pull things off from ground zero of environmental care instead of attempting to push things farther for the sake of ecological balances. Thereby, a moderate and virtually more consensual stand was taken, which was further presented as legitimate in light of EU environmental regulations that governmental and state actors had to abide by. In addition, claims still resorted to expertise discourse, very often drawing upon technical data elaborated by state administration departments or by the groups.

Ultimately, all this means that, discourse frames of most policy issues, as performed by both the movement and state actors, were positioned by reference to the contents of the EC version of ecological modernization and sustainable development discourse, which by the mid to late 1980s was being forged as mainstream in more advanced nations and international regimes. In this sense, cleavages seemed to be essentially a question of interest definition, frame interpretation, and scope and priority of environmental policy action. While movement interests were essentially self-defined as cultural and a-political, that is, socially and politically independent, the interpretation of ecological modernization frames by movement organizations tended to be maximal. On the contrary, political commitments with broader social and economic interests, and the double role of the state as actor/promoter and regulator of economic growth and infrastructural development drove government interests to minimal interpretations of ecological modernization mainstream frames.

The role of pivotal «interest groups» in the environmental policy sector afforded by the bias of institutionalization opened by the state, was highly acceptable for most influential movement organizations, whose action strategy drew upon communicative and expertise means to make the most of the EC adhesion factor. In other words, to exert pressure upon state actors in order to make policy action and law implementation to come closer to EC environmental regulation patterns. However, this meant also that movement actors conceded on a kind of virtual, discursive frame consensus. At the discourse level, although not necessarily in policy action practice, this consensus reached the apex when environmental issues started being framed as a «politics of modernization» affair, in parallel with development and infrastructure building issues. That is, «modernization» turned out to be the key word of political discourse about both economic development and environmental issues.

In consequence, movement organizations hardly pushed for new issues to enter the environmental policy agenda, but were instead limited to resort to policy agenda definitions as they flowed from the EC regulatory orbit. Thereby omissions and implementation of either environmental laws or policy decision making became the main focus of environmental collective action. Environmental groups simply turned out a pervasive monitoring eye of governmental policy action and omissions.

In a certain way, thus, the institutionalization of environmental politics in Portugal followed an odd, contradictory model, which Chapter 8 will specify better. First, it does not draw upon 'green' party politics, but resembles a simulacrum of government *versus* opposition splits. Second, the primacy of the role of the state as actor and promoter of development and modernization of the economy virtually hindered the emergence of a «politics of interests» on environmental issues either outside or inside the state sphere. In accordance with a long tradition of state centralism and protectionism still prevailing in the political culture, the state kept the monopoly on policy-making agenda definition. Eventually movement organizations were consulted, and ad-hoc separate negotiations with industries, local governments, grass roots protesters, and the parliamentary opposition were made. But this is a simulacrum of consensus-making by the state, which does not form an autonomous sphere of interest articulation.

Movement organizations took the form of volunteer, a-political, issue associations. And of «public interest» groups, too. However, given the deficit of interest intermediation, they had to resort to other forms of participation and mobilization, drawing upon communicative action means, expertise discourse, field research, lobbying, press releases, educative action, and so on. Eventually, they became also parallel channels of democratic participation and public interest intermediation, adding something to the political system, but ultimately environmental agendas continued to be determined by how rigorously governmental actors were able to apply basic environmental policy orientations negotiated with, or dictated by, Brussels.

It can be, however, that the subsidiary principles which draw upon the regulatory role of EC/EU environmental policies fit better in nations relying upon powerful environmental movement organizations able to push environmental policy issues ahead. In the case of a «late comer», less developed nation, they found environmental movements originally enfeebled by insufficiency of organizational resources, by deficit of participatory political culture in civil society, and by political contexts of transition from authoritarian rule and underdevelopment. This made mobilization potentials of environmental issues overshadowed by basic welfare and democratic rule issues.

## **Part IV - Conclusion**

### **Chapter 8. - Collective Actors, Public Space, and Ecological Communication in a «Late Comer» Advanced Society Polity: The Case of Environmental Politics in Portugal**

#### **8.1. Introduction**

The aim of Chapter 8 is to have a final, conclusive discussion on the structure of the public sphere of environmental politics in Portugal, accounting for institutional contexts and communication processes of environmental collective action. The discussion will examine both empirical achievements of the case-study and previous theoretical reflections on the concepts of «political opportunity structure» and «public sphere». The specifics of the case-study and the explanatory model can now be gathered with regard to empirical descriptions made so far, in order to appraise theoretical approaches and the analytic model followed in the analysis.

Naturally, conclusions refer essentially to the phenomenology of the case. By confronting analytical results with explanatory problems, hypotheses, and intervening variables, I will stress how a «political communication» model shows more liable in enlightening participation of associations in the public sphere of environmental politics as cultural groups of public interest.

#### **8.2. The emergence of the environmental movement in Portugal**

In the mid 1970s, when most advanced democracies in Europe started being swept by a massive wave of contestation, which inaugurated a cycle marked by the emergence of «new» political issues and «new» social movement politics, Portugal was still immersed in a horizon of traditional economic and social structures. As it is commonly admitted, most political structures in Portugal have their roots in the transition to democracy period and in the process of regime formation. In Chapter 2 I pointed out the kinds of political structures that modeled the *status*,



forms, and the character of collective action in environmental politics along the period of analysis. Namely, the forms of state action, political system, political culture, and organizational patterns of policy-making structures were analyzed. In this regard, certain kinds of democratic practices and patterns of political culture that sustain particular institutional modes of policy and decision making in the environmental domain were highlighted. The analysis of the prevalent institutional design of environmental policy making in the period accounts for the low level of openings of policy-making structures to participation of movement organizations, and of other non-state actors as well. The evolution of the environmental policy field within a policy-making context subordinated to an economic and social development shortage. The aftermath of the EC adhesion also shows how practices, patterns, and modes of policy-making were an effect of the political culture and of the *locus* of state action within political structures.

Thus, after contextualizing the Portuguese case as a «late comer»/«post-authoritarian» democracy from the peripheral, less industrialized area of the European Union, a set of essential elements characterizing the political system were highlighted. Namely, the structure of state action and the functioning of the politico-administrative system determined some important structural features of political opportunities for environmental collective action. A focal characteristic of this structure was the model of the party system, all structured to exclude non-party organizations from playing a role within the political system. This made party politics practically the unique axis of political representation and of democratic routines. Consequently, the space available in the political system for autonomous interest articulation was very limited.

However, given the apparent centralism prevailing in the structure of the state and of the administrative system, even the parliament ended up as a subordinate element of political life in the period. This means that the government had a lot of autonomy in policy decision making. In this context, the political public space came to be a strategic sphere of political action for non-party action groups. But it was also an extension of party politics field, in that it was widely used by parties to influence opinion-making and extend control over other sectors of collective action emerging from civil society.

Moreover, widespread and firmly established traditional patterns of political culture acted as a blocking factor to developing and improving participatory democracy institutions. These

patterns of political culture have their roots in a tradition of authoritarianism and centralism of the state with its origins in a long lasting anti-democratic regime. This means that they had been widely patronized throughout this century. The struggles against left radicalism of post-coup revolutionary times reinforced these patterns of political culture not only within state action structures, but also overall in political institutions and civil society. Political channels for the exercise of participatory democracy existed since the advent of democracy in 1975, but they were mainly offered to, and viewed by, the citizenry as a gift from the state. Ultimately, they were essentially a means to enhance legitimacy of state action and extend the influence of party politics.

A common view about autonomous collective action in Portugal tends to neglect the emergence of the so-called «new» movement and «new» issue politics in Portuguese polity and society. This view focuses in particular the environmental movement, deceiving its emergence, impact, and career in comparison to cases of other most advanced democracies. Explanations bearing on the backwardness of the nation are often called to sustain this view. This leads invariably to the idea that underdeveloped economic and social structures tend to block the emergence of environmental concerns and, as a consequence, less developed societies have inevitably less developed «new» movement «industries». This framework ends up being self-convincing enough to vindicate the inescapable failure of the environmental movement to emerge as a major political and social carrier of «new» issue politics in Portugal, which I claim is not necessarily true. The problem with these kinds of explanations is that they act as a screen mirroring their *a priori* assumptions in empirical facts. Thereby they are unable to see beyond virtual backward factors.

The only way to avoid falling into the trap of the economicist argument based on the lower level of development and industrialization is full examination of the case. This factor certainly influenced the mobilization potentials of environmental issues. However, the underdevelopment argument shows to be a catch-all explanation, which is -- as I hope fully have proved -- highly counteracted by other facts. My purpose was to show how particular features of Portuguese society and polity, undoubtedly related to timing, pace, and features of transition to, and consolidation of, democracy after a half-century of authoritarian rule imposed by a long-time

backwards dictatorship, are at the origins of specific conditions for the emergence, political career, and societal impact of the environmental movement in Portugal.

Although admittedly not borne upon any kind of systematic empirical research, other local authors focusing upon the emergence of «new» movement politics in Portugal also hindered civil society's role due to factors deeply rooted in political culture and political system factors, in order to justify the presumable weakness or «deficit» of new social movements (e.g. Freire 1985; Santos: 1994). Santos' approach (1994) to the emergence of «new» social movement politics in Portugal also aims at coping with the problem of particular paths of non-central societies joining modernity. The author advances three explanation lines or research hypothesis for understanding why local branches of «new» social movements have found it hard to emerge and have an impressive impact in Portuguese polity and society.

(a) The societal and political impact of «old» social movements and issues next to the fall of the late political regime was strong enough to disperse, short-cut, and hold back the emergence of «new» ones.

(b) The lack of a strong tradition of action by social classes in Portugal opened the way for either the anarchist «from the bottom» kind of action in periods of social upheavals, or alternatively to the hyper-politicisation of leadership in periods of democratic stability, which would explain the tendency of the germs of NSMs to easily switch over the mainstream politics even before the movement itself was created.

(c) Finally, the «deficit» was also explained by the lack of «external agents» or political entrepreneurs ready to vest their professional, ideological, cultural, and political skills in «new» movement issues, being instead efficiently co-opted by parties or attracted by the opportunities created through clientelism in the political system, thus, choosing to enjoy the advantages of being close to political parties either in power or in the opposition (Santos 1994: 230).

This scholar concludes by stressing the fatality of «feed-back» between «old» and «new» political issues and practices, that is, between the issues and practices of mainstream political party politics and representative democracy, and those of participatory democracy and «new» social movements. Following this view, the «materialist» values claims -- that is, better wages, welfare, etc. -- and representative democracy issues had supposedly taken the primacy over the

«post-materialist» ones -- such as ecology, anti-nuclear, gender and racial equality, participatory politics. (Santos 1994: 90).

The lack of systematic empirical work on the field covering different areas of «new» movement politics does not allow to assume that one hypothesis fits better at the detriment of the other two. My own research covering the field of environmental collective action, as documented in Part II and III of the piece, shows how all hypotheses fit better altogether, each one accounting for different stages and particular moments of the «political process». Maybe, it is not the particular fitting of each hypothesis *per se* that matters, but that all three hypotheses rely upon important factors of the political opportunity structure for «new» politics, which have their roots in historical contingency of political and social processes that had structured the political system. Some of these factors had been particularly effective at different moments of the democratic consolidation process, while others are losing effectiveness due to current political and social change. A lot of them seem, however, to remain attached to, and are accentuated by, the current functioning of the political system.

An important hindrance to the emergence of new forms of autonomous collective action, in particular of mobilization waves over «new» kinds of issues similarly to movements that by the mid 1980s were distressing mainstream politics in other central European nations, has been the drawback of civil society by current Portuguese political structures in the ebb of the revolutionary period. The weak dynamics of civil society as a counterpart of centralism of the state and of the preponderance of party politics in the political system is certainly at the origins of the lack of autonomy of social movement cultures from then on. Unfavourable political opportunity structure conditions for the emergence of «new» social movements in Portugal is thus an «old» story.

Actually, after the «feedback» of «new» issues caused by the avalanche of «old» social movement claims throughout the revolutionary period, the monolithic excitement and isolationism of far-left radicalism in the ebb of the revolutionary period by the early to mid 1980s had maybe contributed to closing the doors for making participatory politics and institutions a political issue. From then on, alternative collective action started finding unfavourable conditions to successfully take upon an autonomous space within the polity from where to call for «new» issue rising in political agendas and, thereby, to compete with largely predominant mainstream parties in public

and political agenda-setting. Even when «new» issue opportunities happened -- as in the case of the nuclear energy issue -- groups and activists of alternative sectors that potentially should have mobilized in opposition to mainstream parties were unable to dispute the leadership of public debates and mobilization over the issues. Their contesting of political order and of the current functioning of the political system, as well as their proposals for participatory democracy were still too anchored into direct democracy ideologies, although they were then framed more as a complement than an alternative model to representative democracy. Yet, groups and alternative sectors presented themselves impoverished and weakened by strong internal cleavages, by lack of consistent political leadership, and by unsufficiency of organisational resources.

Unable to play a leading role in mobilization over concrete problems and issues that, ultimately, were offered by parties to public debate before decision making in legislative instances, alternative groups were certainly less able to self-impose in the political sphere as carriers of «new» political approaches and models of economic development, international relations, and natural resources management. It is known that, by the mid 1980s, these kinds of issue frames were generating a political area that was receiving widespread adhesion in several central European nations. The electoral results, increasing membership, and political impact of the German greens, which still remains as the paradigm, exerted a strong attraction among alternative activists.

By this time, the debate over the forms of enhancing political participation in this area of alternative politics in Portugal mobilized in particular many ecologists. However, after having seen that *mass media* and some mainstream parties were eagerly and successfully appropriating their ideas over nature protection, environmental defence, and natural resource managing; and that green issues started making some old heralds of mainstream politics popular, they ended up remaining outside the political party institutional field.

Although made in part by default, this option was borne upon two main reasons, both containing a handful contradictions. First there was unequivocally a non-confessed sense of realities. Actually, many of the youngest ecologists shared an awkward relationship to party politics with their age group peers. They did not refuse participation in the resolution of public affairs as such. On the contrary, they demanded more opportunities to participate in decision

making over issues that affected their age group interests and were eager to join associations as a means for participation in many aspects of social, political, and cultural life. However, this age group showed a profound distancing from party politics.<sup>1</sup> The most emblematic sign of this attitude is maybe the insistent contention by most environmental associations in self-declaring as a-political, meaning that they are not only independent of parties and open to all individual political choices, but essentially that they do not align action by any kind of vested economic, ideological, or political interests. In any case, this option implied their willingness to avoid direct control by, or confront with, party politics.

The second reason has to do with a clear refusal by younger generations of environmentalists of verbal radicalism encompassing conceptions, proposals, and ideological orientations of most ecologists of the «old» generation. The refusal was obviously extended to include the so-called «new comer» ecologists, who had previously served radical left groups that started decaying by the late 1970s. In so doing, the environmental association field threw away important ideological, cultural, organisational, political, and identity resources, of which these activists were carriers due to years of experience in non-parliamentarian radical left politics. It meant also, therefore, the rejection of ideological means and resources susceptible of promoting the development of strong symbolic mechanisms of group and movement identity.

However, once again, a sense of practical realism was at the origins of this second kind of refusal. Recent experience of radical left groups had proved rather badly for verbal and

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<sup>1</sup> Almeida (1995) offers an insightful analysis about this tendency of young people concerning participation in politics by the early 1990s in Portugal. In spite of wide confirmation of this tendency given by several survey pools, empirical evidence, particularly concerning the youngest strata of urban active population, revealed also there was still strong disposition for other forms of collective action. This means that the lack of trust in political institutions does not necessarily imply that new (or even partially new) forms of collective action and political participation should receive necessarily the same indifference by the young citizenry. After the decay of grand ideologies and the current «protestantization of catholicism», groups and individual citizens tend to preserve the autonomy of their own ideological choices, frequently resorting to variegated combinations of different ideologies. The author adds that being right or left wing, as it was usually defined before, used to mean a complete and articulate package of values and behaviours concerning several aspects of social and individual life, going from political and ideological options, to ethics, religion, and way of life. But things changed, and people are nowadays able to search for diverse combinations of different options in all dimensions of social life (op. cit.: 68-69).

conceptual radicalism. It had distanced groups from the «real world» in a way that is usually more proper of cohesive political and religious sects, due to the tendency to transform what in the beginning was an open critique to the established models of society into fundamentalist beliefs. Given the encompassing features of the «political opportunity structure», the environmental association movement avoided to be condemned to the same declining fate of the radical left.

In any case, debates of the mid 1980s over organizational forms to enhance the political and societal impact of environmental groups' participation in public life and in the polity had completely lacked a methodical and consistent political analysis of structural conditions and constraints. So it was also in what concerned consequences resulting from the alternative offered by state actors to enhance institutional participation of movement organisations in political and public spheres (Freire 1985: 10).

Nevertheless, there had been some important and wide consensual areas of debate over the targets of ecological collective action. In particular, there was consensus over strategic issues that could expand mobilization to the exterior of the organisational field due to their strong mobilization potentials, as previous protest waves around some specific issues (e.g. the nuclear and eucalyptus issues) had proved. In spite of this, none of the political and organisational strategies proposed for autonomous participation in party politics were convincing enough to be accepted by most ecology and environmental associations. As a consequence, more political-biased activists, that is, most activists with a vocation for political entrepreneurs had just dispersed towards their own niches -- or chosen self-complacency and isolationism of radical discourse -- and abandoned activism in organisations. Some of them returned to hard, basic tasks of small association life, while others preferred to enter mainstream parties or opted for individual, sparse participation in public debates through the media. Still others assumed themselves as a reserve for future opportunities, or took the chance to embrace new professional activities on the environmental domain in jobs offered by either the public administration or private firms. Jobs in the field started suddenly being offered due to the attention given to environmental protection that the adhesion to the EC originated. Nevertheless, these individual options of ecological activism in the mid 1980s revealed later to be very fruitful for the movement, since they opened important

channels to enhance a process of gradual access to policy-making structures, state agencies, and to institutional participation by issue groups born inside the environmental association movement.

However, in order to face a project of institutional participation not restricted to simple consultation and collaboration with state agencies and the administration of the environmental policy sector, it was necessary to have targets and strategic goals clearly defined and borne upon a model of social and political participation of civil society collective actors. That is, an alternative model to current functioning of the political system as regards to participation of autonomous citizen groups and, thereby, a strategy capable of extending the scope of political participation was needed. This is what lacked in the environmental association movement when it responded positively to the invitation by state actors and entered a new institutional and regulatory framework of participation.

By this time, the newly federative coordination of the movement was incipient and maladroit. Moreover, it was launched more due to direct solicitation made by state actors than for real demands of associational life. Furthermore, participation had been made independent, often even instead, of direct participation of populations potentially affected by policy issues in debate. Thus, participation of groups had often been used by state actors as a substitute of interest articulation and autonomy of social processes and social conflict. This means that the philosophical contents and assumptions of «new» social movements were in part absent from this process and, it must also be said, of every day life, organisational contents, and mobilization goals of the majority of environmental associations. In this way, the acceptance by Portuguese environmentalists of the idea that consistent and coherent regulatory action through state policies for the sake of environmental defence and nature conservation was perfectly compatible with current market mechanisms and the functioning of representative liberal democracy models -- provided the state was aware of its regulatory role and strongly oriented towards intervention -- has been made without, and regardless of, any kind of internal debate over ecological and environmental philosophies available. Only the idea of entering politics by doing it «another way» seems to have been present. In the end, the collaboration with state structures in nature conservation policy initiatives has been made too much on the basis of an underlying trade-off



between the government and the association field, the state offering resources for associations to survive and help the nation to improve environmental performance.

Of course, the political party model is not exclusive as a tool available for alternative politics to participate in social and political life. Nor is it necessary to have political power as a target to foster influence upon society or polity. This is maybe true for political and social forces of the establishment. Moreover, direct political participation using the party model of organisation and intervention as an exclusive tool was maybe not the most adequate choice for the movement under the circumstances. This means that, given the constraints of party and political systems to autonomous collective action; the conditions of the political culture; and hence the shortage of civil society role in the political system, the political party model option was likely to become an exclusive model of action. In this case, it would cause a waste of mobilization and organizational resources in potentially deceptive electoral campaigns, dreaming with electoral scores that hardly would equate the exceptionality of the ones green parties were obtaining in other European nations. On the contrary, mobilization and organizational resources revealed essential to improve knowledge and the scientific performance of associations; to achieve the right of representing public opinion in institutional bodies of the administration, particularly, in state bodies with regulatory and policy-making functions (though not in executive and decision-making institutions); to participate in, or collaborate with, peripheral and sectorial state administration organizations, municipalities, and communities where important decision-making takes place.

Actually, these are some of the paths of action and civic participation that environmental movement organizations had gone through in Portugal the last decade in face of the self-determining and self-centred functioning of the political system and the state. The tendency was to join state policy action initiatives and to improve scientific skills of associations as action resources aiming to legitimate and improve political representation of environmental interests in state administration instances, instead of heading for more political-oriented organizational structures and mobilization actions in order to link environmental mobilization to grass-roots and social conflict in issue rising. This is, maybe, at the origins of the preponderance of moderate environmentalist trends -- as opposed to political ecology ones -- in the Portuguese green

movement after the mid 1980s. Moreover, these paths pioneered the transformation of most important environmental associations into very influent «public interest groups», acting either by means of direct pressuring upon state administration and policy-making instances; or strongly influencing public debates over development and environmental issues through media channels, in which groups managed to find, and were regularly offered, exceptional conditions of receptivity to echo their standpoints and opinions. The empirical analysis of Parts II and III of this research have further identified the cultural paths of issue frames, political opportunities, organizational resources, organization movement careers and trajectories, policy issue events, as well as changes in political structures and in the sphere of the state that allowed for such developments.

Basically, the argument is that, contrary to expectations of being similar to green movement careers well-known in other most advanced society democracies, the environmental movement in Portugal had just followed particular paths in consonance with the nation's own path towards modernity -- that is, towards achieving political, economic, and social structure models prevailing in other European central nations.

Coming closer to the focal point of research, I argue that the enhancing of environmental collective action and protest, while furthering the institutionalization of environmental dialogue, also depicts the re-emergence of civil society. Besides having contributed effectively to increase environmental consciousness of the people and of state actors along the period of analysis, it had also stimulated in many ways institutional change for a new kind of dialogue between the state and civil society in Portugal. It has definitely contributed to strengthening the role of public space debates in policy-making and policy agenda-setting processes, and has pioneered new forms of institutional participation of «public interest groups» in policy and decision-making structures.

### **8.3. Associations and issues in the public sphere of environmental politics**

The starting point to build an analytical framework for this research was the so-called «political process» model. The concept of «political opportunity structure» is the analytical tool at the heart of the model, aiming to analyze the problems of collective action and participation in

public and state arenas of agenda-setting processes. Inherently, the rise of environmental issues, and the shape and patterns of the environmental movement in Portugal came to be seen as a dependent variable of factors related to political processes forged by state action, to internal structures of the political and politico-administrative systems, and to the functioning and design of policy-making institutions. Contributions of this model to account for mobilization potentials of environmental issues, movement action, and participation in agenda-setting processes in face of a «given» political opportunity structure made it an obvious analytical choice for a «nation-case study».

This approach distinguished the most basic sets of macrostructural political factors influencing the emergence and the shaping of the environmental movement, stressing the level of organization displayed by the citizenry and socio-economic interests outside the party system, and a comprehensive definition of political realities determining the degree of structural 'readiness' embedded in the structure of political opportunities. The emphasis put upon the so-called «political process model» was, thus, widely justifiable.

Bearing upon basic orientations of the «political process» approach, I built an explanatory model apt to analyze most determinant conditions and dimensions of the political opportunity structure that shaped the patterns of both the environmental movement emergence and the developing of environmentalism in Portugal. However, since I was dealing with mobilization and public participation in agenda-building processes over environmental issues, which could not be seen as purely political phenomena, I took into account that environmental collective action was also dependent upon other influential processes and framing factors with specific cultural meanings.

Moreover, these processes and factors, which are forged both at political and societal levels and have certainly institutional and organizational effects, come to be decisive in issue agenda definitions, in movement organizational resources and mobilization potentials, and in patterns of action. Thus, the theoretical model to approach the analysis had to comprehend broader political and cultural processes and factors that embedded collective action, and agenda-setting and policy-making mechanisms.

That is to say that issues and issue definitions succeeding in public and policy agendas depended not only on collective action for the sake of environmental protection and nature conservation, but also on broader framing processes influencing strains and discourse of all actors engaged. Therefore, one had to face social and cultural processes of change whose scope of factors and effects extended beyond political structures *strictus sensus*.

Environmental movement group mobilization and policy demands have to also be seen as embedded in a broad field of interaction. Besides depending on their own resources and mobilization potentials to succeed, protest action and public participation of environmental movement organizations has to be gradually and broadly assumed by other social groups, which enhance public and political acceptance of environmental groups and increase legitimation for their claims. In other words, protest and policy demands of environmental groups were analyzed as «social constructions» involving a diversified and broad set of collective actors.

The «political opportunity structure» as an environment of movement and group action have, thus, been specified and described not only as a sphere of interorganizational interaction, but of communication too. This was made in accordance to features of the «case», in order to enhance the concept's accuracy for analyzing participation processes in public and political debates run in arenas which ultimately are communicational devices of collective action.

The most important problems I discussed about the concept of «political structure opportunity» were, thus, the assumption that a political and organizational environment of social movement organizations cannot be seen as mostly static and unchangeable. Secondly, the fact that this structure cannot be independent of the broader societal impact of «new» issue debates. Particularly, environmental issue definitions and frames have deep roots in societal processes of cultural change. Environmental movement organizations more often appear as «cultural pressure groups» (Statham 1995; and Eder 1996a/b), making environmental collective action to be better conceived as «cognitive praxis» (Eyerman *et alli* 1991; Jamison *et alli* 1990; Jamison 1996). From this point of view, a narrow definition of the opportunity structure as a political and organizational environment, which points to a set of interactions that merely take place within the realm of politics in a strict sense, asked for defining new dimensions beyond specific political and policy issue arenas. Designing opportunity structures as simply an interacting network of political

or *proto*-political actors with no specific places to meet each other in forging, negotiating, and communicating issue definitions and frames ignores relevant dimensions of shaping social movement action patterns. The question was, thus, how do social movement organizations communicate with their environment rather than simply being constrained by, or resonate upon, it.

Yet, «political opportunity structures» are usually defined as long-term structured environments facing up to waves of protest and collective action. They are very often seen as essentially constraint systems upon which a movement's political success ultimately depends. If defined as simply a set of political devices, without establishing public spaces where issue frames and definitions, and cultural practices are forged, there is no way for social movements to impose their issues other than the political realm. Consequently, their goals could only be defined as for political or policy purpose, and no other way of communicating with society was left than through political structured arenas or a-legal protest actions aiming at having impact on the media and the public.

The problem with the features of this case-study is that, due to particular conditions of the political process -- namely those related to the transition to, and consolidation of, democracy and the resulting ascendancy of state action and party system over civil society -- hindered environmental collective action to mold in terms of political action. This is why I had to turn to approaches more focused upon the European tradition of «new» social movement analysis which, by means of integrating several levels of analysis, provided a more comprehensive definition of collective action as social construction and/or social communication. Thereby, environmental movements can be thought of as collective actors for cultural change, whose social identity is both self-produced and socially-constructed through social learning processes.

This analytical framework opened the way to construct an explanatory model which specifies a broader set of actors and factors coming from both inside and outside the political system. The levels of analysis were no more confined to the functioning of the political system or to institutional and movement politics. The need to account for the institutional context of social movement action and for social learning processes embedded in broader societal and cultural frames led to defining an analytical dimension that could comprise cultural change. This

analytical dimension allowed to focus inherent social learning processes whose discernment is borne upon the logic of discursive communication. This broader network of collective action and discursive communication may be better defined as a «system of social communication».

The explanatory model had, thus, to account not only for organizational skills and mobilization resources available to reference groups and movement organizations, but also for the discursive contents of collective action and public participation. In this way, actors and institutions were brought together in defining issues and setting agendas by means of discourse conflicting and frames, more so than in interest negotiation, which the features of the case showed to be less relevant. The attempt to establish a more comprehensive notion of «social construction» of environmental issues assume that «agenda-building» processes and policy domains -- the environmental policy domain, in particular -- are embedded in broader cultural frames. The main purpose of my argument is, thus, that the embedding of agenda-setting processes and collective action of the environmental policy domain has to assume that public policies of the environmental field are critically affected by cultural change. That is, the analytical framework and the explanatory model ought to stress the cultural dimensions of environmental politics.

For instance, as we saw, the emergence of environmental issues as «social problems» in Portugal and of their main carriers -- in which I included both social movement organizations and state actors of the environmental policy domain -- had been a target of image making by the mass media. Also, they involved educational, communicational, and cultural institutions, and mobilized expertise and knowledge carriers, all contributing as discourse-makers to define problems and issues. The balance between the language of conflict and of consensus carried through mobilization processes and debates gradually transformed the problems' definition. The creation of an environmental culture encompassed the rising up of interpretations, discourses, symbols, and institutions embedding the definition of environmental issues as social problems.

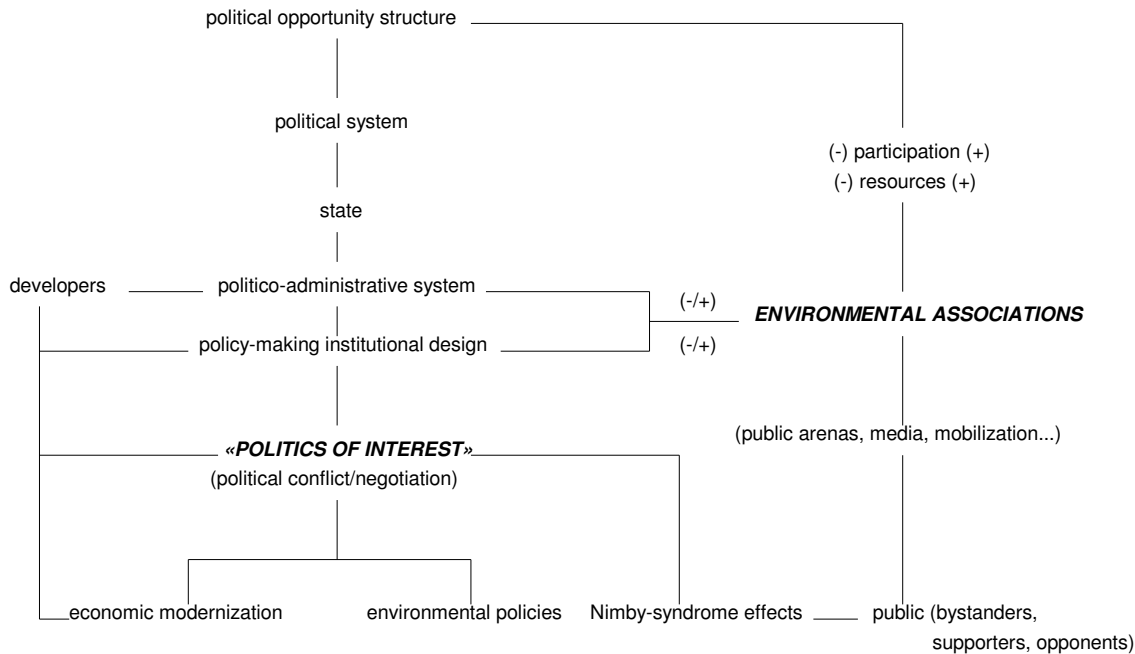
The shaping of collective action patterns and organization as social constructions embedded in interaction and communication processes was up to these institutional and cultural referents. Interaction and communication were, thus, key dimensions of the cultural and structural environment and of the organizational frame of environmental collective action. In this context, policy agendas appeared also as «social constructions» with roots in this institutional and cultural

system. Focusing on the study of environmental issues in a context of interaction among issues and among actors as organizations operating at multiple, interacting levels, the model allowed for treating processes occurring simultaneously at several levels of analysis.

Four levels of analysis or analytical dimensions were circumscribed. At the political level, the turn of political events were related to the «ups and downs» of environmental issues in political agendas and policy priorities, and to unfavourable patterns of the political opportunity structure regarding the emergence of environmental protest as a political movement. At the institutional level, concrete events over environmental issues and policy agenda-setting, linking environmental movement associations to state actors of the environmental policy domain, dominated the analysis of the patterns and trends towards institutionalizing participation of associations in environmental politics and policy-making processes. Relevance was also given to organizational resources and organization patterns of environmental associations; mobilization processes over environmental issues; competition, interlocks, and «division of labour» between movement organizations; and to the impact upon the public and the media of protest actions by environmental groups. Finally, discourses in the public and political spheres of environmental politics, mainly focusing on development, modernization, and environmental issues. They performed conflicting views and frames over the future of society (and of the nation), which the ideas, values, and beliefs falling under the labels of «environmentalism» and «industrialism» express.

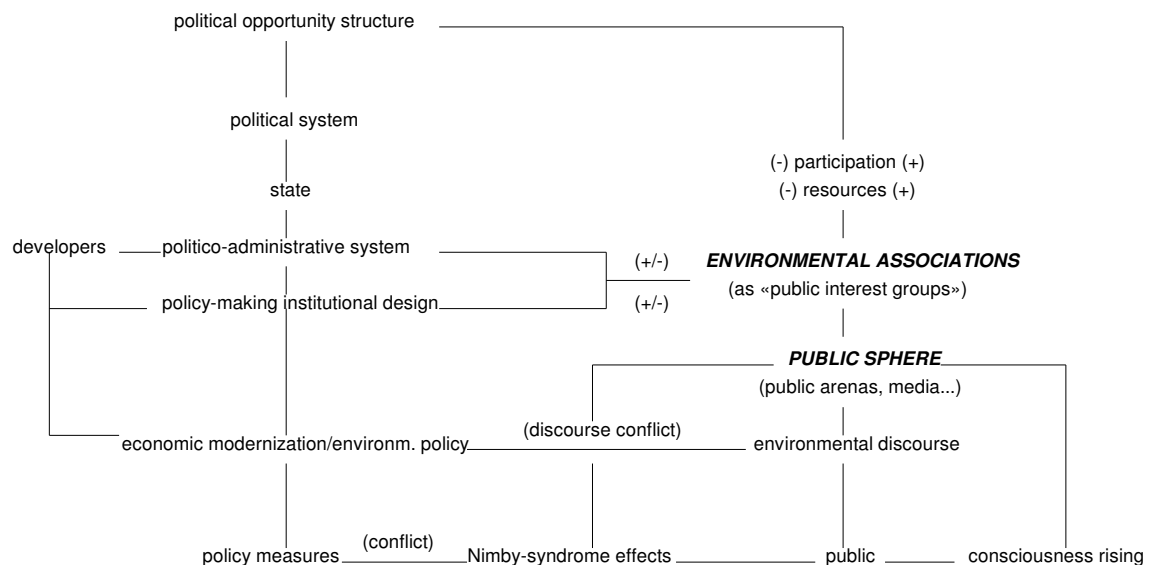
In order to include all these analytic dimensions and objects of analysis in the analysis of environmental politics in Portugal, I had to push the analytical model that was my starting point somewhat further. Figure 2 (see p. 274) schematizes an outline of what I call a «political communication» model approach, and a similar scheme representing a straight «political process» model approach, as I see them applied to analyzing environmental politics in Portugal. The main difference between the two models has to do with the introduction of the idea of the «public sphere» in the Habermasian sense, which emerges as a broad cultural and institutional mediator between collective action and the politico-administrative system, the political sphere, and the public.

**Figure 2**  
**- Analyzing Environmental Politics in Portugal -**  
**1. A «political process» model approach**



Focus of the model: Environmental associations in the realm of the «politics of interests».

## 2. A «political communication» model approach



Focus of the model: Environmental associations as «public interest groups» in the public sphere and further political and cultural effects of «discourse conflicting».



Actually, the elements that are included in the structure of the «political communication model» are similar and not formally different of those incorporated in the idea of «political opportunity structure» as defined through a framework approach of the «political process» model. Differences occur, firstly, in what concerns the structural relevance ascribed to communication process, that is, discourse in first place. Secondly, in stressing the communicational role of association collective actors as «cultural public interest groups» that give privilege to discursive action in the public space.

This is a way of seeing environmental collective action as both a political and cultural endeavour. Whereas a straight «political process» model approach allowed us to see the acting in the public space by means of discourses and of communication processes essentially in terms of direct impact in policy and decision-making processes, relying on the potential support of the public as a source of political and legitimacy resources, the «public space discourse» or «political communication» approach aims to go somewhat beyond.

As a matter of fact, the normative intent of the Habermasian idea of the «public sphere» introduces a new dimension of participating in opinion making and decision formation processes. It allows one to see late movements of voluntary associations as more than merely «interest groups» acting by means of negotiation and conflicting in the realm of «politics of interests» institutionalized processes. They are not only means of approximating the public -- in particular, those affected -- to the formation of opinion and decision-making, thereby improving participation and ameliorating the conditions of democracy, but they also provide the public the discursive resources to allow participation.

In other words, what ultimately differentiates the two models of analysis is, on the one hand, a theoretical construct and, on the other, an output achievement of research, which the leading focus of both models make explicit. While the focus of the «political process» model tends to concentrate on political conflict and interest articulation, giving, thus, primacy to practical, institutional interest negotiation as a «politics of interest», the «political communication» model focuses more upon discourse conflict and further cultural and political effects deriving from participation of environmental associations as «cultural public interest

groups» in the public sphere of environmental politics. Thereby, it allows to conceptualize the role of environmental groups as «cultural pressure groups» rather than simple political actors or groups of interest intermediation engaged in the «politics of interest». Their action in the public space, is, thus, closer to the idea of «communication action». Other scholars used the expression «cognitive praxis» to highlight the role of environmental groups as intermediary channels of expertise knowledge and producers of practical discourses (Eyerman *et alli* 1991; Jamison *et alli* 1990; Jamison 1996).

I have so far discussed the first aspect, which makes the theoretical basis and analytical scope of both models complementary, that is, the intent to account for discursive/cultural dimensions of environmental politics. Obviously, I do not conceive this as a research outcome borne upon the case, just that it is consistent with features of environmental collective action in Portugal as so far described. Let me now refer to the second aspect.

Throughout my analysis of about two decades of environmental politics in Portugal, I often referred to the deficit of interest articulation and of autonomous negotiation of conflicts as the counterpart of a long tradition of state centralism and lack of autonomy of civil society affecting the political culture. This does not mean that negotiation and mediation of conflict among collective actors or organizations of social interests were completely absent. It means played a determinant role in the «politics of interest» as legitimator, promoter, actor, and «protector» in processes of negotiation and consensus-making among civil society collective actors. Moreover, in spite of recent progress in this domain, civil society autonomous organization and representation of social interests, as well as participation of the public in state spheres of policy and decision making still have to be promoted by, or supported upon, state action. To some extent, this also applied to collective action of the environmental sector. But the state always does it in a selective way. This highly influenced environmental movement's choices in terms of organizational and action strategies.

Given the deficit of the «politics of interest», the locus of a straight «political process» model approach is somewhat unfocused in what concerns the case. Regarding adequacy to empirical features of the case, the «political communication» model makes some difference, provided it has proved that the role of discourses in the public sphere have relevant effects on

important dimensions of cultural processes that run parallel to political processes and structures of environmental politics and policy making.

The characterization of political behaviours in terms of competing preferences for action and demand -- that is, seeing groups and interest conflict the essence of politics -- makes policy analysis bear on the assumption that the pursuit of self-interest lies at the heart of political behaviour. Thereby, policy analysis is often reduced to the «politics of interests», and the political realm is seen as an arena into which individual and group interests enter in political dispute for certain policy outcomes. In this view political processes can only be transformed through mechanisms internal to the political system itself. This utilitarian perspective tends to forget that interests are also both produced and framed by cultural values and cultural practices. If one restricts the analysis to what is at stake in policy and political processes in this narrow sense, we would conclude there has not been such thing as «new» politics for the environment in Portugal, because their most important carriers in Portugal did not have electoral weight, and the movement never succeeded in having a consistent political expression or impact upon institutionalized arenas of the policy-making process. In this sense, the so-called «deficit of social movements» in Portuguese society, at least with regard to the environmental movement, seems to be justified. My hypothesis was whether political structures being an important factor for the shaping of the «new politics» of the «lifeworld», concerning particularly mobilization over environmental issues, can further be effected by the emergence of a «political public sphere» which opened new channels for expressing values, beliefs, and interests than merely the channels of politics *strictus sensus*.

#### **8.4. The public sphere of environmental politics: political and cultural effects**

The exploratory attempt to typify discourse conflicting running through the public sphere of environmental politics, which was explained in Chapter 7, aimed at a twofold analytic purpose: to reverse attention from surface arguments over concrete issues by searching for the conflicting perceptions that ultimately generated contrasting positions over facts and issue definitions; and to contrast the contradictory perceptions at stake in the public space of environmental politics in

order to distinguish their different rationalities, allowing to predict how perceptions may change in the public space by means of the permeability of discourses about concrete issues.

By applying a cultural approach to the analysis, one aims also to emphasize what is above and beyond the various interests of the actors, and to search for different convictions that generate different definitions of problems and solutions. Furthermore, it also accounts for the vital link that exists between cognition, rationality, organization, and interests, in that cultural frames also structure the kinds of participation and argumentation of actors in the public space. In so doing, a cultural approach aims to place the focus of analysis beyond a mere politics of interest and accounts for the permeability of discourses as an important effect of communication in the public sphere.

However, a question arises as to what extent these discourses have broader effects upon society and the polity as a whole. Expanding waves of the Nimby-syndrome phenomena may be taken as an ultimate example of it. It shows that, in what concerns environmental politics, the citizenry counts by their own and not simply when co-opted as a political resource by collective actors acting in public and political arenas. A well-suited example of this is the boom of Nimby protest uprising in Portugal by the early 1990s. These protest movements were in most cases organically independent of direct mobilization efforts by environmental groups. Often, they gave rise to associations that, at the local level, started from a typical Nimby protest action, but further organized environmental action and mobilization on a wider range of issues. Moreover, in spite of mobilizing essentially on local issues that directly affected the neighbourhood -- very often due to environmental impacts of production activities and of infrastructures serving the region or the whole nation -- they often repeated at the local level discourses, arguments, and criticism over technical solutions adopted by developers which environmental groups had previously advanced. It means that, at least, knowledge and information resources made available by collective actors participating in public debates were also widely used by the citizenry, provided circumstances, opportunity, and fears of risk or pollution encountered a «populace [already] accustomed to freedom» and «socialized» by discourses in the public space.<sup>2</sup> In other words, if conditions are

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<sup>2</sup> I am quoting here the words of Habermas (1992: 453), which I emphasized in Chapter 1, p. 35.

present for practical discourses to be directly referred to concrete situations, collective actors may emerge directly from the «anonymous mass» of the public, their will, action, and interest definition running independently from groups that originally forged discourse frames over the issues at stake.

These phenomena allow me to introduce the question of the broader political and cultural consequences of the late opening of a public space on environmental politics, which groups elected as their most important field of action. It also supports my search for an analytical model to account for both political and cultural resonances of public space discourses upon the society and the polity in the conditions of a «late comer» society. Let me begin with some observations about the Nimby-syndrome phenomena, which I see as a prime political and cultural consequence of the structural conditions of the public space within the environmental politics realm.

The Nimby-syndrome phenomenon is often handled by decision makers, ecologists, and political-science analysts as a purely individualistic behaviour in face of the public interest, or as essentially «non-postmaterialistic». In fact, it is said to represent a vivid case of the principle that in democratic regimes decision-making processes and institutions are in general considered fair insofar as they do not affect one's own interests. However, in face of decision-making practices currently observed in my «case-study», the question may be put another way. Why have instrumental reasoning borne upon technical criteria and state actors' definition of the «public interest» to be accepted as the epitome of fairness in alternative to participative democracy or cooperative modes of decision-making?

Arguing for her conception of a normative model of democracy after the discursive model of political ethics originally developed by Habermas, Benhabib (1992b) remarks that «democratic procedures have to convince, even under conditions when one's interest as an individual or as a group are negatively affected, that the conditions of mutual cooperation are still legitimate» (op. cit.: 19). Precisely, an important feature of Nimby movements' «practical discourse» highlighted by my case is that, more often than not, it reacted against non-participative modes of decision making and self-sufficiency of policy makers. Or, at least, this was consistently used as the justification.

The Nimby-syndrome phenomena visibly express political consequences which combine with cultural effects originated by the late opening of a public sphere in environmental politics. Most consequences are found in blocking valuable governmental initiatives in environmental policy making by widespread and permanent questioning of site facility locations; in questioning policy-making procedures based upon technocratic self-sufficiency of state actors; in further political radicalization of interests affected by the environmental policy domain, which state actors would prefer to define as mainly an expertise policy sector due to specific technical complexities of environmental issues. Furthermore, the opening of policy decision-making processes to the public and to broader participation of the citizenry, often risks its efficiency, transforming technical complex issues into a «politics of interests» issue. Still, contestation of technical and scientific expertise, which administration resorts to in order to legitimate issue resolution and decision-making procedures, forces governments to use authority instead of consensus making as a means for policy implementation, thereby driving state actors to bear upon representative democracy legitimation rules in state of participative democracy or cooperative mechanisms.

Therefore, political legitimacy, policy decision-making procedures, politicization of mainly technical issues, social equity, etc. -- as they were presented in Tables 2-4 of Chapter 7 -- come into discussion under the form of «practical discourse» about local environmental issues. This means that conflicting perceptions of environment *versus* modernization present in debates within the public space expand in some way over society, reaching other fractions of the public. The problem comes when Nimby's take upon discourses available in the public space for their «practical» purposes, combining self-interest and issue cultures.

Another effect of discourse interlocking in the public space of environmental politics -- which the Nimby phenomenon also exemplifies but is not restricted to -- is certainly the increase of environmental consciousness of the population. This includes, of course, economic actors, as both producers and consumers, which are an important factor of environmental protection. Although this may appear as the most obvious effect, it must be said that this aspect of the problem is very often treated as just a political resource available to environmental collective action, which would tend to use it for influencing political and policy agendas. Instead, the public

space model allows us to analyze it as a process of discourse interaction, where different, eventually opposed, meanings and beliefs carry on arguments that ought to be shared and internalized by everyone, that is, other collective actors, politicians, policy-makers, economic actors, and the public.

The Nimby-syndrome phenomenon is an example of how «unknown» citizens can assume environmental discourse and make it play a further political role, as far as it bears their «individualistic» interests. The Nimby-syndrome recent outburst in Portugal shows also how grass-roots movements are no longer only motivated by the lack of affluence, welfare, or employment. Moreover, their claims often focused on political decision-making procedures, blamed for simply ignoring those affected by decisions. In other words, participatory democracy issues are also implicit in grass roots collective action on environmental issues.

Maybe the Nimby-syndrome phenomenon, even assuming a Nimby is always a potential Niaby, provided it embraces the ecological discourse, is not a well-made indicator for the current rising of environmental consciousness within the citizenry. Actually, local observers and ecologists keep complaining about the low level of environmental culture of the common citizenry in Portugal (e.g. Marques 1994: 111; Schmidt: 1993). Anyway, environmental groups seem nowadays to be easily accepted by the media, further playing the role of an accessible source of news and expertise (Valente 1994). Still, environmental issues now enter media-agendas more frequently, which is always a sign of the level of public interest about an issue.

Another effect portrayed by environmental organizations in the public sphere, as described in previous chapters, is the question of the specific political role of environmental collective action. The refusal of most environmental groups in Portugal to play the party politics 'game' can be seen as a strategic stand consistent with the conditions of the Portuguese polity. As a well-known environmentalist leader once said, «the plurality of models available to environmental collective action might correspond not only to concrete conditions of every country and region, but also to the kinds of tasks to face as well» (Marques: 1994: 86). The that this stand had a strategic purpose was admitted by the same leader, adding that «the ecological movement cannot do without, but cannot be restricted to, party politics», its most important task in this realm being «to exert pressure and gain influence upon mainstream parties» (*ibid*).

Actually, the hegemony of the party system within the polity does not mean necessarily that all parties can share its political benefits equally. So that, access to power and to the electorate in Portugal is since long being concentrated on the two major center parties. Therefore, as an alternative to eventually falling into a small political 'ghetto', ecologists in Portugal opted for opportunities offered by an increasingly influent public space. In some way they pioneered the experience of being an important actor in a complex policy sector that, besides its relative «newness», was characterized by a «deficit» of opposition and democratic control over state action from within the political system. As I referred to, parties in the 1980s were particularly unskilled in the environmental domain -- except, perhaps, for the governmental party.

Apart from specific conditions of the polity and of the economy, the absence of strong party organizations mobilizing on environmental issues is not by its own a feature that strongly differentiates the Portuguese case. Otherwise, though performing a rather moderate political profile, the Portuguese environmental movement has clearly expanded and increased its political and cultural influence in society throughout the period of analysis. Its strengths cannot be assessed only in terms of political influence and organizational resources, which could be explained by the conditions of the polity and by the level of affluence within Portuguese society as a whole.

By locating themselves outside the political party sphere and, at the same time, favouring well-founded and skilled participation in the «public space», they seemed to succeed more easily in mobilizing and achieving broader consensus on their issues at the societal level. Of course, this consensus is not based on political choice, strictly speaking. It is mainly cultural-oriented and founded upon discourses proclaiming to be both rational and rooted in scientific reasoning and knowledge, but whose intent is ultimately «moral» in the sense that it aimed at a «new ethics» of relationships between society and nature to be incorporated in policy goals, and ultimately in the behaviour of us all. In the «public space» this discourse is mostly shaped by reference to concrete issues and events, thus, as a «practical discourse», which may be further assumed, translated, and incorporated by the public and state action as social practices.

The «public sphere» model also stresses the role of political culture and public discourse as a means for change. Following this assumption, it means that achievements of «new issue»



politics depends less on intrinsic structures determining the configuration of «political processes» embedding the emergence of «new» social movements, than on conditions of free debating in the «public sphere».

Very often environmental movement achievements are assessed based upon the assumption of stability of political structures. The case of the environmental field of a «late comer» polity such as Portugal seems to portray a suitable field for an empirical test. The question is whether the environmental policy sector in Portugal can be viewed as an emergent policy domain where the growing participation of association actors and, ultimately, of the citizenry, pioneered «new» forms of political participation. If it is the case, it affected not only relationships between citizen groups and the state, but also public administration *versus* industry and other policy actors, which seldom worked together in policy making and implementation in the past in an institutionalized way, whereas they now cooperate more often in environmental pacts and other policy-making initiatives.

Of course «new» forms of integrating civil society collective actors in policy-making have extended to other policy domains. Moreover, it must be said that, in spite of this pioneering, the environmental policy domain hardly transcended a second-rate priority rank during the period of analysis. But it may happen that, in the conditions of a «late comer»/«post authoritarian» polity, because of its second-rate priority status, it is suited for pioneering «new» patterns of institutionalizing cooperation between the state and citizen autonomous organizations.

### **8.5. Political opportunity structure, public sphere, and ecological communication in a «late comer» advanced society polity**

According to the mainstream «political process» model approach, I hypothesized that it would be primarily the circumstances of national politics and not factors inherent to social movement phenomena which determined the emergence patterns of environmental protest in Portugal. The simultaneity of achieving democracy, modernity, and higher levels of affluence and development played a determinant role in shaping the careers and organizational patterns of environmentalism in Portugal as both a social movement and a «new» ethics ruling relationships

between the economy and the natural environment. A first consequence of this was the deficit of social movement as a political project. Other local authors called it a «deficit of social movement» *tout court*, which is not exactly the same. In spite of the low degree of mobilization potentials of many environmental issues raised by environmental groups during the period of analysis, the impact of protest actions around some of them -- e.g. the nuclear-power and reafforestation with fast growing species issues -- showed it is wiser to have a more nuanced assertion about the occurrence of environmental protest in Portugal between the advent of democracy and the stabilization of the nation as a full-fledged member of more advanced industrial democracies.

Resonances of protest movements coming from elsewhere are also conditioned by historical circumstances of national contexts, in particular by political process events and «political opportunity structure» factors. In the case of Portugal -- and maybe of other «late comer»/«post authoritarian» democracies -- these resonances faced in the mid to late 1970s a «transition to democracy» process that made political actors and social movements focus and mobilize essentially on basic citizen rights and institutionalization of the democratic rule. From then on, an acceptable degree of welfare and development remained a strong mobilization will and issue frame. It does not mean that democracy was not at stake in «new» social movements' protest in the period. Nor is it a question of what comes first: democracy, affluence, or ecology. Since social movements always reveal anxieties and utopias deeply rooted in processes of change in course in societies, the fact that democracy was in the way of stabilization made political and party cleavages a major issue frame of social conflicts underlying both the construction of a new political system and the reform of the state. Particularly, the achievement of parliamentarism as the basis of the democratic rule had been made at the expense of blocking participation of all political and social actors not legitimated by the vote of the people. This happened to the labour movement, «far left» non-parliamentary organizations, participation of militaries in state power, and also to other kinds of political and social interests that suddenly emerged from the bottom after the revolutionary *coup d'état*.

Since the very beginning, first organizations mobilizing on environmental issues got swallowed by this wave of intense political expression. The stabilization of democracy meant also

the closure of the political system towards autonomous political action not credited by the party system and the state. Thereby, only by the early to mid 1980s had environmental movement organizations -- particularly those refusing to enter the party politics scene -- achieved wide visibility and some mobilization success.

Thus, the evolution of political processes, political regime, and state form modeled a structure of political opportunities that obstructed a significant impact and visibility of collective action on environmental issues. The unfavourable profile exhibited by the political opportunity structure became a determinant factor for the deficit of environmental politics and protest performed by the first environmental movement organizations emerging in the 1970s and early 1980s, maybe more so than the degree of development, industrialization, and modernization of the nation.

Changes occurring by the mid 1980s in cultural and political processes of agenda setting, shifts in public issue attention, and the decline of other movements fueled the growth of other influential organizations of the environmental movement. However, the role of the state in shaping what I call the «second wave» of association environmentalism is also relevant. Debates over organizational priorities and action strategy for the movement by the mid to late 1980s anticipated already the fading out of green party politics. Late political ecology trends that were predominant within the movement by the mid to late 1970s started gradually losing weight and influence both in the movement «industry» and in public arenas of environmental politics.

Actually, institutional arrangements deriving from the new legal framework that state actors «offered» to environmental groups had highly contributed to shaping the patterns of this «second wave» of association environmentalism in Portugal. First of all, state action towards the sector found the so far autonomous organization field of the environmental movement widely split. Several political ecology trends -- some of them closer to late far-left ideologies than to ecology -- did not find the way to articulate action and were corroded by divergence over organizational patterns and political strategy, though more often than not divergence was more a question of vantage point and self-interest in competition for leadership. The resolution of the anti-nuclear conflict against such powerful lobbies installed at high levels of the state, mainstream parties, and industrial elites, had made many ecologists of the previous period fantasize about

mass-protest waves over ecological issues similar to those once experienced by the worker and far-left movements in the «good old times» of the post-coup revolution. By the mid 1980s, however, they were split, disorganized, and more scrupulous about the participative framework «offered» by the state.

It is said that democracy and the political system in Portugal had been shaped not only against the remaining political structures of the late dictatorial regime, but also against from the bottom political mobilization achieved by far-left parties, the Communists, and the militaries in the revolutionary period. This determined an unfavorable political opportunity structure for the «first wave» of environmentalism and political ecology groups of the pre-Adhesion period. However, by the mid 1980s, the stabilization of democracy and the political regime, and the adhesion to the EEC made the opportunity structure more favourable to a new model of movement associations whose phenomenology, orientations, and organizational patterns I analysed in Chapter 7. This model is, in my view, better described by the concepts of «cognitive praxis» (Eyerman *et alli* 1991; Jamison *et alli* 1990; and Jamison 1996) and «cultural pressure groups» (Statham 1995; and Eder 1996a and 1996b).

Indeed, it was the wise commitment of associations to invest in knowledge and communication resources that allowed them to maintain some autonomy as regards to state actors and party politics, and for strengthening their stand both in environmental policy-making arenas and in public fora where the resolution of environmental issues was at stake. While knowledge resources facilitated the entry of associations into policy-making arenas, which otherwise were essentially reserved for administration expertise, communication in the public sphere disclosed complexity of the environmental domain and made it accessible to the public. Environmental politics in Portugal may, thus, be better understood as a social learning process in which both democracy and the relationship of society *versus* nature were discussed, questioned, and gradually learned.

Because this kind of collective action does not express through usual political science indicators -- such as electoral outputs, mass protest actions, petitions, large constituency, strikes, parliamentary action, and so on -- internal observers and analysts of political processes in

Portugal 20 years after the *coup d'état* could hardly acknowledge the role of the environmental movement in achievements of Portuguese society towards modernization.

It is true that, even accounting for specific local conditions, the impact of environmental collective action upon the Portuguese society and environmental politics cannot equate with that of worldwide organizations in environmental international regimes or of other advanced economies. But the influence of the Portuguese branch of the ecological movement had expanded throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s. The increasing ecological communication which Portuguese society is now experiencing may not be an effect of «outside» factors alone. In spite of the international «wave» of environmental concern, and of the role of EU environmental policy, it is worthwhile to remember that the EU factor is one that acts primarily through institutional and state channels, particularly when it does not find an autonomous and active civil society. In the conditions of a «late comer» advanced society polity, how is it possible that such factors could operate independently of concrete mobilizers acting as intermediaries of ecological communication in the public space of the democratic system? Concrete «political opportunity structures» do matter, but one cannot just get rid (in analytical terms) of this kind of mediation, and of mediators themselves. And one cannot imagine the increase of ecological communication - - which I documented so far -- without the mobilization support of association actors striving for issues in the public sphere of environmental politics.

Another question arises as how theoretical constructs and analytical assumptions that are essentially rooted in more advanced society conditions make analytical frames suitable to deal with emergence and institutionalization of environmentalism and environmental politics processes in nation-states which made a late entrance into the advanced industrialized «club» of Western democracies. The emergence of environmental issues and of «new» social movements are described by most relevant social science macro approaches to the ongoing modernization of highly advanced societies as specific features and central dimensions of shaping modern society social structures. Independently of theoretical orientations, these approaches tend to converge into a sort of 'ideal type'. By and large it bears upon linking the emergence of late social movements and environmentalism to the trends of industrialization, economic growth, and potential disfunctions triggered by structural changes in differentiation and rationalization of modern

political systems. This 'ideal type' refers explicitly to given historical and political contexts, and evidence comes mostly from more advanced, industrialized societies of the Western world. However, environmentalism and environmental problems had further globalized. Worldwide communication networks also made knowledge and discourses on environmental issues to standardize and to be shared. The current tendency of «ecological modernization» discourse to turn mainstream -- be it under forms of internalizing ecological system demands into political and economic systems (Mol and Spaargaren 1993) or as «cultural politics» (Hajer 1996) -- and the trends of professionalization and institutionalization of environmental collective action at both international (Jamison 1996) and national levels (e.g. Donati 1994; Offe 1990; and many others) are processes that parallel the «normative institutionalization of environmentalism» as an emerging «post-corporatist order» (Eder 1996, 193-212).

That the aforementioned questions and processes also affect «late comer» societies has been clearly demonstrated, but they may not necessarily assume the same patterns and configurations therein. Ultimately, this is what counting on «political opportunity structure» factors means. As far as the rise of environmentalism and environmental protest in Portugal during the last decades, we saw through analytical descriptions of Parts II and III how a set of evolutionary trends steadily diverged from models stressing continuity between waves of mass mobilization on environmental issues and the institutionalization of environmentalism. In spite of mobilization potentials and effective high impact of a couple of environmental issues concerning public opinion and the public, environmental protest of the late 1970s to mid 1980s may hardly be characterized as broad mass protest actions. Anti-nuclear movement demonstrations of the late 1970s and early 1980s, in spite of public support, did not fostered continuity of environmental protest. Cleavages inside mainstream parties and political elites over the issue benefited the non-nuclear solution, but not the environmental movement. The lack of mass support for direct mobilization initiatives of movement organizations made them waste energies in countless internal (and personal) divergence about how to give a sustainable organizational *élan* to movement action. «Green» party politics, whose current success somewhere in other European countries attracted many political ecology pioneers, was partly imported, partly pushed by «new comers» from «far left» and other alternative movement groups in decline. Unfavourable factors

of the political opportunity structure shaped organizational and action patterns of «green» party politics into a *cul-de-sac*, which only a new wave of associations -- more concerned with practical activity of nature conservation, and exhibiting steady moderate political orientations by self-defining their aims as a-political -- found the way out.

By the mid 1980s, the adhesion to the EEC had a decisive influential role on several domains. Besides facilitating the nation to enter a new phase of economic development and governmental stability, the re-structuring of the environmental policy domain to make the state abide by EEC environmental policy-making rules would imply deep changes in environmental politics too. The launching of a brand new environmental policy sector inside the administration was needed to respond to commitments with the EEC, but state actors in charge of it had to face inertia, blockages, and competition of other policy sectors long installed inside state structures of the politico-administrative system. Moreover, they could hardly count on being given enough policy-making priority both in terms of governmental action and state budget. The enhancing of public participation by means of promoting and strengthening a promising sector of emerging environmental associations, which showed more favourable to collaboration with state action, represented in this context a wise strategy of the environmental domain state actors. This strategy also aimed at meeting political support within civil society, and further political legitimacy in order to impose the environmental domain as a consequential policy-making sector.

That the process was full of contradictions is not surprising. State action had not always been consistent with, and coherent *vis-à-vis*, these strategy lines. On the contrary, what followed was often governmental actors' attempts to withdraw associations the means, though not the rights as such, of participation. This happened, for instance, when associations were simply granted the role of environmental «educators», or when a closure of the environmental policy-making sector as essentially a technical domain was attempted. By then, however, environmental groups had already attained high levels of political legitimacy, organizational skills, and knowledge resources to oppose any attempt to exclude them from environmental politics arenas. Moreover, they had developed enough mobilization skills and expertise to persistently exert pressure on political and policy-making actors by means of discursive action in public arenas. Although they hardly had succeeded in imposing their views and issues at the policy decision-making level, they were

regularly consulted by the administration, and competed for the «ownership», definition, and resolution of environmental issues.

In any case, under the conditions of a «late comer»/«post authoritarian» advanced society polity, state action aiming to improve social initiative of civil society has a particular meaning. I have discussed the problem of state action as simultaneously a regulator, promoter, and actor of social and economic development in less-developed nations. The «late comer»/«post authoritarian» condition means also a state «in transition» and a civil society on the way to restructuration. A lot of efforts to advancing towards de-centralization and to making state action and decision-making accessible to the citizenry and to collective action have been made in many fields. Ultimately, after a half century of dictatorship and state centralism, and next to a period of strengthening the authority of the state against from the bottom upheavals of the revolutionary post-*coup* period, there was not too much autonomy left within civil society.

The less-developed condition of the country had other consequences for the environmental field too. Besides strongly dependent on other policy fields, environmental policy achievements of the nation in the period covered by this research had essentially been pushed by EC adhesion commitments, while collective action in the field seemed to have been more confined to having essentially an, otherwise important, cultural role. Certainly, environmental problems were not necessarily «new», nor intrinsically different or less weighty than in other advanced societies. Thus, the question arises as to what extent social visibility of environmentalism, the «social definition» of environmental issues as «social problems», and the emergence of environmental protest in such a less developed, peripheral, relatively advanced, and «late comer» society, was subordinated to, and obstructed by, the politics of development, economic growth, welfare, and modernization. More often than not, primacy of development and modernization problems to achieve advanced nations' economic growth and welfare patterns, which is well-expressed in policy-making agenda priorities of state action, forced movement organizations to elect mobilization issues -- mainly those resulting from unbalanced relationships to nature and to the environment -- resorting to mainstream modernization discourse frames. From this point of view, the sustainable development or ecological modernization discourse frames, rather than mainstream, became a banner of environmental movement opposition.



This is why it is relevant to emphasize as a factor of social change in modern societies the role of autonomous citizen groups in enhancing communication in the public sphere over issues of the «life-world» they mobilize on, as the European tradition approaches to «new» social movements do. As far as changes in relationships of late modern societies to the environment is concerned, where the emergence of environmental movements had less relevance or movement organizations were weaker, as it seems to be the case of «late comer» advanced societies, social change in this realm may become blocked. Or, at least, it ran at slower pace, although the context of economic, cultural, and political integration and the trends of globalization may provide other means for change. Thus, development, economic growth, and modernization, as they are expressed by collective actors engaged in communication processes of public and political debates, tend to appear as main frames in social definitions of environmental problems. And they have, of course, further influence in the structure of opportunities for environmental protest.

However, this does not necessarily mean that a lower degree of development, industrialization, and modernization comes before political opportunity structure factors in shaping the emergence and institutionalization patterns of environmentalism and ecological protest. By emphasizing the starting political conditions as an opportunity structure, the «political process» model of analysis assumes that the fact that «late comer» societies may remain attached to problems of development and welfare, while attempting to achieve, as a priority goal, thresholds of affluence similar to the ones of their advanced society peer democracies, is not necessarily the most relevant factor for the emergence of «new» issue movements. But a normative-deliberative oriented model of analysis has the virtue of putting at the center of the analysis the cultural dimensions of the polity. Thus, it gives more emphasis to the emergence at societal and political levels of «new» issue-problems. The analysis of the experience of a «late comer» society -- and the environmental policy domain seems particularly adequate for the test -- shows how definitions of «new» issue-problems with efforts towards achieving simultaneously affluence, modernization, and democracy. From this point of view, the increasing of discourse and communication in the public sphere is, maybe, the last thing left, not because of the substantive ethics of valuing nature, but because the opening of communicative spaces within

society is in these circumstances a «dam» (Habermas 1981 and 1992) to balance the instrumental reason of economics and power politics.

This is why the analysis could not be restricted to environmental movement politics as such. Collective action for the sake of the environment is essentially a social learning process and an act of engaging in broad symbolic struggles over the process of constructing specific meanings of society *versus* environment relationships. In order to grasp broad societal meanings implied by environmental collective action in Portugal, the assumption that communication processes in the public space ought to have influence in policy-making made discourses about environmental and modernization issues an important dimension of the analysis. I also hypothesized that, assuming a certain degree of independence and autonomy of environmental collective action, the increase of «ecological communication» by means of discursive action carried out by environmental associations ought to implicate further changes that gradually incorporate in political culture, in cultural traditions, and in patterns of socialization about how to deal with nature and the environment in every day life, in economics, and in policy making.

Ultimately, it may have contributed to changes in the «political opportunity structure» itself. In other words, the pioneering efforts of environmental movement organizations as carriers of the ecological discourse, brought about new styles of action in the public sphere, and opened channels of participation in public affairs that had initially strongly contrasted with current patterns of «political culture» and «socialization» predominant in the Portuguese polity. This also represent a vivid example of how autonomous organization of civil society for the «public interest» may contribute to enlarge democratic practices and participation patterns of the citizenry by means of enhancing the role and the functioning of the public sphere. In this sense too, «new» social movements, or what these kinds of associational collective action emerging the last decades in advanced society polities may be called, do form groups of contestation, deliberation, and argumentation over issues of «public interest». At the same time they are also carriers of a new «political culture» into the polity and society.

As a reflexive account of this case-study, let me highlight the need to bridge «political process» analysis and a cultural approach to studying environmental conflict, in order to illuminate further political and cultural effects of «discourse conflicting». Ultimately, a «political

communication» model is an attempt to go beyond an analysis whose focus is restricted to political conflict and institutional negotiation. Environmentalism is essentially a process of «social construction of nature». This seems to represent something more than simply a question of conflict between interest groups -- as intermediates of the economy and of the ecology -- which the state transforms into a «politics of interests» for the sake of articulation and resolution. In the conditions of a «late comer»/«post authoritarian» advanced society polity «case», it may be better to analyze the rise and institutionalization of environmentalism as a broad «social learning» process where political and institutional arrangements meet cultural processes of issue framing with regard to ecology, development, modernization, and democracy.

#### **8.6. Post-scriptum on prospects for further research on environmental protest in Portugal: Who are the challengers now?**

Drawing on a one nation-case study, this piece sets out to explain the specificity and the dynamics of environmental mobilisation in Portugal in the last twenty years. It seeks to provide an extensive historical-sociological account of the shaping and institutionalisation of the environmental movement in Portugal. If nothing else, this research into the making of the environmental movement in Portuguese society aims at contributing to know better the features of the rise and internalisation of environmentalism in a Southern Europe «late comer/post authoritarian» democracy.

Aiming at giving a well-grounded analysis of the phenomenon dynamics, the collection of materials grasped and its systematic presentation concentrate on interactions between environmental groups, the state, and the Europeanization factor within fast changing arrangements of power. The analytical model, in which political opportunity structures, public discourses, and specific mobilisation structures of the environmental movement interact, emphasises the importance of public debates and allows to explain the specificity of the rise and institutionalisation of the environmental movement in this nation-state case. The analysis of associational structures, of the intricate political game of environmental policy making and environmental issue politics, and of the role of the Europeanisation factor provides an explanation

of political games at stake. Thus, an attempt was made to understand how, in the case of a nation-state whose polity was characterised by the particular configuration of being a democracy in consolidation, the opportunity structure for environmental movements is different from that of societies with previously established democratic structures. This fact hindered the environmental movement to shape as a genuine political movement and made it more a kind of cultural movement. To grasp this, the analytical model presented complements a «political process» approach with an emphasis on public discourse, which showed to be well suited to uncover this aspect of Portuguese mobilisation processes for the environment in Portugal.

To argue for the centrality of the environmental movement in this thesis, a further discussion of current theories of environmental movements is necessary in order to highlight and contrast some assumptions about, or clarify ambiguities and potential contradictions raised as regards, the nature of different forms of environmental protest. This is the case, for example, of the meaning and assumptions associated to grassroots, local level, or neighborhood environmental mobilizations often labeled as the 'Nimby' phenomenon.

Actually, a differential treatment has been given throughout this piece to grassroots environmental protest, which may lead to some confusion about the nature of environmental protest and its outcomes over the last few decades in Portugal. A conceptual discussion of the different forms of the environmental movement is, thus, maybe necessary. Finally, the opportunity is taken to present some reflections on prospects for further research on environmental protest in Portugal.

Although this thesis accounts for the emergence and further intensification of diverse forms of grassroots mobilisations on environmental issues, this topic was not the central focus of research. Centrality was given to movement organisations aiming at some kind of stabilisation of their organisational resources and means of action in order to participate in processes of defining issues in public, political, and policy-making arenas. Grassroots mobilisations and local level protest movements on environmental issues were analysed in context; they were ultimately seen as external pressures to prioritise environmental policy issues in state action, thus giving legitimacy to environmental discourse and protest action.

This is still the case of the so-called Nimby phenomenon, which after 1993/94 gained in Portugal wide expansion and political impact, as documented in Chapter 6 of this piece (see also Kousis 1999a; 1999b). I must confess that, initially, I did not forecast to approach under this label the long list of local protests on environmental issues that I was able to report for Portugal since the advent of democracy. First of all, because the label is in itself highly polemical. Secondly, because the phenomenon was not a central focus of this research, which mainly concentrated upon the emergence and institutionalisation of environmentalism in Portugal as public discourse and organisational action, be it by means of state action or by concrete organisational structures of the environmental movement. Thirdly, because the model of analysis and the methodological apparatus used in this research were not intended to understand the phenomenon as a cohesive social process.

However, the characteristics of the recent wave of local mobilisations against the siting of development and environmental facilities in neighbourhoods shows that, in spite of a lot of similarities, it seems there is something new by comparison with former local protest movements on environmental issues in Portugal, at least in some aspects that eventually deserve further research. One can say that some features of the political opportunity structure changed in the meantime, as summarily described in this Chapter. This means that not only the constellation of interests at stake in the field of environmental politics changed substantially, but also that discourses shaping the interests of actors changed too. For instance, former local protest movements on environmental issues could easily harmonise with the protest of environmental groups in blaming the lack of environmental policy action and of environmental considerations in the siting of development and infrastructure facilities. While now, more often than not, the targets of local environmental protests are concrete environmental policy initiatives dictated by a constellation of «knowledge interests» (Jamison 1996) which tend to be shared by developers, state actors of the environmental policy domain, and environmental groups themselves. The contradictions and complexity of the game seem, thus, to have increased. This is why I discussed in this Chapter the Nimby label usually applied to this phenomenon. It partly justifies also the differential treatment given to what many authors admit as a different component of the

environmental movement, which is thereby identified as a wide range of challenging groups mobilising on environmental issues.

The applicability of Tilly's (1994) encompassing definition of social movements to the environmental movement is well endorsed by Kousis (1998). According to this author, the Tilly's distinction of contemporary social movements into three types -- the professional SMOs, the 'ad hoc' community based and specialised ones, as well as the communitarian, unspecialised that give rise to a new community -- is well reflected in the environmental movement across national cultures. The first type corresponds basically to the professional or institutionalised environmental SMOs and «old» conservation/preservation societies, whose today's bureaucratised styles and thousands of donating but weakly committed supporters allow to raise doubts about their resemblance to a social movement. The second is made of community based, 'ad hoc', and often single issue social movements, which seem to be increasing nowadays in certain geographical areas, and whose particular dynamics of unconventional pressure on decision makers show they are perhaps more temporary but richer mobilisations. They may be typically represented by Nimby/Nioby or environmental justice grassroots groups, which are more difficult to identify and their number and consistency hard to assess, in that their scope of action is more often then not restricted to specific locals. Finally, the declining classical example of deep or radical political ecologists who are identified as the communitarians of the environmental movement due to their highly committed ideological stand (op. cit., 86-7).

The fast growing literature on the environmental movement documents how these initial efforts of definition and determining factors meet with the current debate on the future of the movement. The institutionalisation of the larger, more active, and resourceful organisations, their involvement in policy-making circles at both the national and supra-national levels, and their support of ecological modernisation initiatives, whose discourse they contributed to forge (Jamison 1996; Hajer 1996), stand for diverse versions of the 'end of ecologism' argument.

For instance, Eder (1996b) says this is an era of 'post environmentalism', where ecological discourse is normalised and belongs to everybody. That is to say that the monopoly of the environmental movement on 'ecological discourse' has ended, and the age of environmentalism as collective mobilisation for a cause is over. The discourse of ecological public goods is becoming

a new *masterframe* in the public sphere, its emergence representing the «second transformation of the public sphere». These conditions turned environmental groups into 'cultural pressure groups' and its survival depends on how they are able to secure their position within the *identity market* of discourse on ecological public goods.

In the case of Jamison (1996), his conception of the environmental movement as 'cognitive praxis' and of ESMOs as knowledge producers, thereby highlighting the continuity of their role in mediating scientific and practical knowledge on environmental issues, stands as a way of viewing the bridges that bound the continuity between the radicalism of environmental collective action in the past and their current involvement in decision-making circles both at the national level and in supranational regimes. It is the 'knowledge interests' of both the challengers and challenged that changed in the meantime. Thereby, he awaits the emergence of new critical trends in society by giving voice to new partisan intellectuals and from causes of the peripheric, developing world nations, whose expectations of reaching economic standards of the developed world are being blocked by the global environment discourse and controlling initiatives forged in the centre.

Although these authors do not foresee the 'end of ecologism' as the end of the problem, nor as part of the solution either, nevertheless, this stands for other writers to maintain that 'environmentalism' as a radical critique of current political and economic power structures re-emerges nowadays in the form of popular resistance movements, which directly challenge and implicate democracy and the conventional political arena. In some cases, as Kousis (1998, 85) notices, there is in addition a lot of hope lying in the possible collaboration between grassroots mobilizers and ESMOs, inside or across national borders as a means to exercise pressure on state and suprastate bodies. After all, protests that are initially motivated by self- or neighbourhood-interests often lead to increase awareness of ecological problems. Hence Nimbys may become Niabys (see Schwarz and Thompson 1990), although it is not obvious how collaboration between different types of environmental movement groups is to be materialised in order to strengthen their power and create more pressure to achieve goals.

In his analysis of the «ecological modernisation as cultural politics», Hajer (1996) clearly identifies these high expectations put on Nimby protest movements against centralisation and

hierarchisation of decision-making with the critical interpretation of ecological modernisation as the continuity of the technocratic project. Here, the fight to circumvent local Nimby protests through centralisation and 'increased procedural efficiency', indeed the mere construction of Nimby protests, is seen as illustration of the tendency to take away democratic rights under the veil of environmental care. Hence, Nimby protests are recognised as a building stone for an anti-technocratic coalition, whose aim is to further more democratic social choice mechanisms centred on 'civil society' rather than on the state. New political institutions that would facilitate this correction are the introduction of 'right to know' schemes (in Europe), the widespread use of referendums, and above all the decentralisation of decision-making and the right to self-determination (op.cit., 255-6). However, the author alerts also for possible perverse effects of the *ecologisation of the social* stimulated by the current institutional learning process of ecological modernisation. These effects are visible, for instance, in what is being called the new regionalism (new localism or new tribalism) emerging from the 'politics of place', that is, the 'place'-oriented ideologies of German new right circles (op. cit., 264-5).

Of high interest for further research on the Portuguese case is certainly the approach that is being developed by Kousis (1998; 1999a; and 1999b) on local environmental mobilisations in Southern Europe, which in addition bears on data collected in several Southern Europe nations including Portugal (see Kousis 1999a; 1999b; and Aguilar-Fernandez et alli 1995). This approach provides wide support for the part of the new social movement theory that stresses local mobilisations against siting facilities as forms of resistance by ordinary citizens to the intrusion of the state into their daily lives.

Although it is widely accepted that the severity of ecological disorganisation does not highly correlate with mobilisations on environmental issues, and that the development of movements is heavily shaped by their own actions and resources available; nevertheless, some critical environmental preconditions are thoroughly necessary for their emergence. In Kousis work, these preconditions are described as «parts of the process of *ecological marginalization* [*italic is mine*] which usually entails the take over of local natural resources by powerful private, state or supra-state interests and the gradual or immediate ecosystem disorganisation, with the



subsequent inevitable disorganisation of biological processes, the locals' loss of their resource base, and the generation of public health risks» (Kousis 1998, 87).

According to Kousis (1998), a lot a social scientists who are not movement specialists have brought to surface factors associated with the structure of economic opportunities and constraints, structural inequality issues, and the ideological motivations of grassroots environmental movements. These factors have more often than not been downplayed by social movement analysts of resource mobilisation and political opportunity structure models' lineage as well as by those of the collective identity approach. Such accounts on structural inequality components of environmental movements at the local level, not only tend to react critically against the implications of the Nimby label used to characterise grassroots movements that rise in response to local environmental problems, but also maintain that «local populations, often mistrusting the government and scientists, in contrast to the environmental organisations, act defensively in order to protect their health and environment from external decisions and projects that have direct negative impacts upon them» (op. cit., 89). At stake are environmental justice issues that stress political and social inequalities imbedded in decision-making practices by powerful groups and the state, leading to important health, social, and economic costs for potentially low-income minority communities.

In addition, some key questions raised by the author link grassroots movements and sustainable development issues. One way of looking at the future of the environmental movement, the author defends, is through carefully examining its relationship with 'sustainable development'. While more conservative wings of the ESMOs tend to adopt the 'weak sustainable development' approach, which is turning mainstream in EU national and supranational bodies under the form ecological modernisation as an institutional learning process, the strong and ideal type sustainable development approaches, requiring more profound changes at socio-economic, ideological and political levels towards a stronger environmentally regulated economy, are more appealing to ecocentric, political ecology ESMOs and grassroots groups (op. cit., 92-3). The challenge remains as how the interests of these groups do materialise on concrete forms of coalition and action.

In what concerns the Southern Europe nations studied by Kousis (e.g. 1999a; 1999b; and Aguilar-Fernandez et alii 1995), or at least for the Portuguese case, it seems that the recent outburst of environmental issue grassroots mobilisations concurs with the decline of more ecocentric, radical, deep ecology ideological stands within the movement. In any case, stabilised ESMOs of any kind are more often concerned about wider scale ecosystem impacts of production and consumption patterns of present society. On the contrary, grassroots groups are essentially touched by local ecosystem impacts, and health and socio-economic effects induced by production or ecosystem exploitation that pose immediate threat to their survival. In addition, they tend to shape their interests independently of any costs benefit balance concerning wider scale ecosystems. Thus, as Kousis (1998) concludes, the examination of different approaches to sustainable development *vis-à-vis* the different types of environmental movements -- and *vis-à-vis* the different types of challenged groups such as state, producers, and supranational powerholding/decision making bodies -- is needed to evaluate the prospects of their success and applicability (op. cit., 94).

This said, what are prospects for further research on environmental protest in Portugal, provide the case is well-suited to allow further contributions to know better the features of environmental movement cultures in Southern Europe, peripheric, «late comer/post authoritarian» countries? Let me finish with a couple of scattered questions, which have not the status of a program of research, nor of a coherent, systematic reflection over the possible future of the environmental movement in Southern Europe (or Portugal either). They are just a couple of questions suggested by the reflection that underlies this post-scriptum: What are the challenges for a nation-state based environmental movement in an age of sustainable development that is also of market intensification and globalisation?

Given the currently known deficit of environmental policy implementation in peripheral, less developed nations of Southern Europe, is there no more place for institutionalised ESMOs to show up as the challengers? Is there empirical basis to talk of an environmental movement or are there as much movements as challenging interests on environmental issues? How do local grassroots mobilizers shape their interests, organisational resources, and forms of action *vis-à-vis* conventional politics cleavages, media amplification, and institutionalised ESMOs? To what

extent do they represent a challenge or a contribution as regards more conventional forms of action and participation in policy-making structures privileged by institutionalised environmental groups? Alternatively, are they able to maintain organisational and political autonomy in order to make a step further towards peak organisational forms of action at the regional and/or national level? In other words, are their temporary and insulation features a fate? Are there intrinsic differences between local mobilisation movements in terms of environmental impacts of location facilities, on one side, and other local protest on structural political and economic inequalities by disempowered groups, on the other? In other words, is it simply a question of sustainable development, or is struggle for enlarged citizenship a more appropriate frame to comprehend the phenomenon? Who benefits from the public assumption of the contingency of scientific knowledge as regards environmental health-related issues, which local protestors are eager to explore? How does 'practical knowledge' of professionalized (or institutionalised?) ESMOs deal with the proclaimed contingency of scientific knowledge that currently gives support to environmental impact assessments? Who is able to dominate in environmental issue definition within the *identity market* of environmental discourse? In as much as the future of the environmental movement in Portugal depends, be it at least in part, on the answer that the movement itself will give to these questions, they may be considered as a starting point for further research steps aiming to give continuity to the work initiated with this thesis.

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EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE  
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## **THE POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN PORTUGAL**

**A Case Study on Institutional Contexts and Communication Processes of  
Environmental Collective Action**

**- Appendix on Data Sources and Methodological Procedures -**

(To be delivered to the Members of the Jury)

By  
J. Gil Nave

Thesis submitted for assesment with  
a view to obtaining the Degree of Doctor of the  
European University Institute

Florence, January 2000

## **Appendix on Data Sources and Methodological Procedures**

In order to obtain variety and wide coverage of data in support of empirical descriptions demanded by analytic devices and hypothesis proposed by the argument, an ample set of data sources (secondary, interviews, documents, archives, media and environmental NGO sources, etc.) was used in the elaboration of the thesis. They are all profusely used, but not identified, throughout the text. They are only vaguely mentioned in Section 1.4. *Data, methodological problems and research strategy* (p.36-41) of Chapter 1.

Actually, information on methodological and data source issues has been reduced to minimal form in order to keep the length of the thesis under the limits. For this reason, almost all references to sources of data directly used in narratives and empirical analysis had also been practically eliminated. This stands in particular for the case of newspapers and other periodicals, whose consultation provided most data, as well as for scattered archive documents. Only direct bibliographical references were maintained.

This Appendix aims, thus, at adding complementary information on data sources and methodological issues. Firstly, it gives a full list of sources that more decisively contributed to data gathering and were investigated with more detail. Full information of their characteristics, coverage, and how they were handled and consulted is also added. Since time was short to systematically cover all sources available, data collecting initiatives were not all equally successful, nor all data sources systematically covered. In some cases, data sources had frustrated the expectations and they are ignored.

Secondly, information on methodological procedures and issue/event selection criteria is appended. Actually, references concerning procedures or how data from the various sources were selected and processed are not visible throughout the thesis. This Appendix aims also at extending the discussion on what lies behind narratives and empirical analyses, in order to provide a clearer view of empirical tools and procedures.

## **1. Data sources**

Press and documentary consultation provided the most consequential set of data gathered throughout empirical work. Data collecting initiatives included consultation of diverse sorts of documents in state agencies of the environmental policy domain, in media and ESMOs documentation centres, and in central and specialised libraries. However, the consultation of media sources provided most of data used in descriptions of contextual political events, public debates, movement protest actions, and on issues in public, political, and policy agendas. Specific events and issues emerging in media agendas and reported in a renowned weekly periodical were investigated in detail from 1974-1995. For the last five years even scattered information from daily newspapers was gathered.

All this provided factual material that has also been useful in preparing guidelines for interviews. Field work comprised visits to ESMOs headquarters and state agencies, and contacts and interviews with several kinds of participants. However, interviews were not directly used as data, but as supplementary information that showed very useful for furthering research.

Relying on quite systematic empirical research, lots of data were, thus, collected, including periodicals and disperse publications issued by environmental groups, which were eventually found in specialized libraries. The following is a list of sources that more decisively contributed to data gathering and were investigated with deeper detail. Information of their characteristics, consultation coverage, and the kinds of data provided are also added.

### **1.1. Press**

The consultation of press covering the whole period of analysis (1974-1995) provided the most important set of data on contextual political events, most striking protest actions of ESMOs, and on environmental issue debates selected for analysis. It provided also the essential of information about the priority status ascribed by different actors to environmental

issues emerging in public, political, and policy agendas. A renowned weekly periodical was investigated in detail and systematically covered for the whole period. This consultation was complemented for the first 10 years by running another weekly periodical in view of following with more detail the public debate on the nuclear power issue. For the last five years of the period of analysis also scattered information from daily newspapers was gathered, which allowed to following more closely the intensification of grassroots mobilizations on environmental issues of the early 1990s and frame changes of environmental issue debates.

The weekly periodical *Expresso* was chosen as main source of press information. Besides reasons that have to do with the editorial orientation of the periodical -- which is locally considered the standard of independent and innovative journalism of mainstream press in Portugal since it was founded by the early 1970s -- it was the only weekly periodical covering the whole period of research with no interruption. Furthermore, it maintained along the years a similar style and rigor concerning the coverage of public debates and issues in political and policy-making agendas. Furthermore, it maintained along the years a particular attention to social mobilizations, protest movements, and issue debates beyond mainstream party politics.

Of course, its coverage of environmental movement politics was not systematic. However, it revealed very satisfactory in particularly important periods, not only in the 'news section', but also through opinion-maker articles and special reports, often issued in the weekly supplement *Expresso-Revista*, addressing the 'ups and downs' of mobilization structures and action of the environmental movement «industry». Some of them are directly cited in the Bibliography. The weekly periodical *Expresso* was thoroughly consulted since April 1974 to October 1995, including all regular and occasional supplements, with particular emphasis on the supplement *Expresso-Revista*.

In order to deeply investigate public debates on some selected issues (e.g. the nuclear power issue, the eucalyptus issue, and local mobilizations on environmental issues), other weekly periodicals or daily newspapers were also consulted in search for further information. In this case, complementary information on selected issue debates was obtained through

consultation of scattered numbers of the weekly periodical *O Jornal*, for the period between 1975-1985; and the daily newspapers *Diário de Notícias*, for the period 1985-1990, and *O Público*, for the period between 1990-1995. Scattered numbers of other periodicals (e.g. *Visão*, June, 3-9, 1993) addressing the state of the art of environmental policy, specific debates on environmental issues, or interviews with governmental or administration leaders of the environmental policy sector, either, were also consulted. In all these cases, consultation had in view particular issue debates; thus, it was limited to short periods previously selected. At the end, the consultation of *Expresso* remained the basis of all information gathered via press consultation.

Finally, the review *Forum Ambiente*, exclusively dedicated to environmental issues and which started being issued in 1994, was also thoroughly consulted from the first number (April 1994) to number 18 (October 1995). This review was initially issued as a monthly supplement of the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* under the title *Jornal - Forum Ambiente* (1994-95). All numbers of this were also consulted.

Deserving attention for the purpose of this research were the interviews to personages of the scientific and environmental politics milieus regularly issued by the review. As for the case of *Expresso-Revista*, articles addressing environmental movement politics and deserving to be cited in the main text of the thesis are included in Bibliography.

## **1.2. Archives**

The Archives and Library of the *Instituto de Promoção do Ambiente-IPAMB* (Institute for Promotion of the Environment)<sup>1</sup> were, first of all, important sources of data on several research issues. In particular, a lot of information was found on the organisational field of the environmental movement, on the shaping of the environmental policy sector, and on environmental laws. Also important were diverse reports of the state administration on strategic targets and issues of environmental policy-making.

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<sup>1</sup> About this state agency, whose role of institutional interface between the environmental administration and movement organisations is analysed in Part II of the Thesis, see pages 79 and 247.

In particular, data worked out in Table 1 (p. 239) were obtained at the *Registo Nacional de Associações de Defesa do Ambiente* (National Registration of Environmental Associations), created by this state agency after the Law for Environmental Associations of 1987. The source of data used in Table 1 is the List of Associations registered at the *Instituto da Promoção Ambiental (IPAMB)* (Institute for the Promotion of the Environment). This is a database containing basic information obtained through an application form previously sent to every association by the administrative services of the agency.

These data were complemented by further information on association's activities, internal rule, organisational resources, scope of issue interests, environmental orientation, membership characteristics, area of intervention, fund raising, and so on, obtained by direct consultation of dossiers in IPAMB archives. All documents and correspondence from associations registered therein are collected in one to four dossiers by association. The consultation of around 200 dossiers gave wide coverage of the universe of associations one by one.

This information was very helpful in characterising the movement «industry» as made in Chapter 7, particularly in section 7.3. Phenomenology and organisational resources of environmental groups. Since it provided wide and detailed information about the environmental movement organisation sector, I abstained from elaborating monographs of selected associations, which was initially previewed by the working plan. Given the wide range of information covering activities of associations one by one, in state of monographs I just concentrated on exploring with more detail information about groups whose dossier was richer.

Although data gathering has accounted for a great amount of groups at the local level, whose existence and organisation often lacks a formal character, the richer dossiers concerned essentially regional and national level associations with more stable organisational structures. In any case, essential information on mobilisation processes, organisational and funding resources, issue and ideological orientation, institutional and movement «industry» relationships, international connections, expertise bodies, constituency, and mobilisation

activities was available in dossiers for practically all groups. This allowed for their categorisation in terms of environmental orientation and mobilisation activity (see descriptive categories next).

Data contents of Table 1 are based in both sources. Consultation was made along 1995. From then on, new associations have registered, but they are not included in the analysis. However, it does not change essentially the contents of the data for analytical purpose. I decided to use the List of Associations made available by the database of *IPAMB* in mid-1995, which corresponds, more or less to the end of the period of analysis. Data provided complete information about the following descriptive categories:

A. Headquarters' localisation by urban centres' size.

A.1 - Big Cities (which includes only Lisbon and Oporto)

A.2 - Medium Size Towns (which includes cities that are headquarters of sub-regional administrative areas called *Distritos*, and others of equivalent size and/or population)

A.3 - Small Towns (usually being the headquarters of a *Concelho*, which is the greatest administrative area at the local level).

B. Headquarters' localisation by region:<sup>2</sup>

B.1 - Littoral North;

B.2 - Interior North;

B.3 - Littoral Centre;

B.4 - Interior Centre;

B.5 - Lisbon and Tagus Valley;

B.6 - Littoral Alentejo (Southern);

B.7 - Interior Alentejo (Southern);

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<sup>2</sup> Besides the Islands of Azores and Madeira, which have the status of Regions with Administrative Autonomy, there are no Regions with equivalent status in the continental territory. However, the Ministry of Territory is decentralized into territorial Commissions covering five main regions for planning action by central administration. I used non-arbitrary subdivisions of these, separating littoral and interior areas, which are consistent with the territorial configuration of social, demographic, and economic development of the country.

B.8 - Algarve (Littoral, Southern);

B.9 - Islands.

C. Associations by area of intervention:<sup>3</sup>

C.1 - Nationwide;

C.2 - Regional (Region or *Distrito*);

C.3 - Local (*Concelho* or site).

D. Characteristics and environmental orientation of Associations by descriptive categories:

D.1 - Environmental exclusive, participation in public debates, addressing a wide scope of issues. This category includes all environmental associations mobilising on a wide range of environmental issues and with particular vocation for public intervention by means of propaganda or participation in public debates, which is more frequent for this category than for the next one. They are almost exclusively run by volunteer work.

D.2 - Environmental exclusive, single-issue or site protection oriented. Associations included in this category are distinct from the previous ones in that they mainly focus on protection and conservation of a special natural site. This defines their main area of intervention as local or regional. When they focus on a single-issue, their area of intervention may be regional or nationwide.

D.3 - Environmental exclusive, scientific or professional-exclusive. This category includes two kinds of associations: a) groups for scientific research; b) and organisations of

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<sup>3</sup> The Law for Environmental Associations of 1987 defines a set of criteria, covering the scope of activity, issue-interest, and constituency, in order to classify associations as 'nationwide', 'regional', and 'local'. The aim is to differentiate associations according to their weight. However, the membership criterium was made determinant. By the Law, a minimum of 200, 2 000, and 4 000 members is necessary to ascribe respectively the 'local', 'regional' and 'nationwide' status to associations. Given the inadequacy of these numbers to 'real' membership of environmental associations, a lot of associations did not get from the administration the classification fitting with their ambitions and scope of action. Often, associations did not reach the minimum to, at least, be classified as 'local'. In this case, the classification inscribed in data obtained at the IPAMB is often said as «provisory» or «with no classification ascribed». For these cases, I decided to follow my own classification, which is mainly based upon information obtained at the archives of the IPAMB about each one of the associations included in the database. Since I had to use my own classification in about 30 cases not yet decided by the IPAMB officers, I opted for applying my own classification to the whole universe due to data consistency reasons. In most cases, classification ascribed by IPAMB officers agrees with my own. There is no consonance over just a slight number of cases.



environmentally related professions or expertise (e.g. the Association of Environmental Engineers) whose activity -- from propaganda and participation in public debates to scientific research and nature protection and conservation activities -- have priority over collective promotion and regulation of the profession. In general, associations of the latter group are exclusive for professionals.

D.4 - Historic or cultural heritage protection (extending activities to nature protection). This category includes a wide amount of mainly local associations, which were created by the early to mid- 1980's and mobilise, essentially on historic and cultural local heritage protection issues. Their activities enrol either volunteers or professionals in research, conservation, and recovering of local heritage in the fields of local history, archaeology, ethnography, architectural heritage, etc. Although they have represented a momentous and successful associational movement in these fields, they were not given by state administration of this policy domain institutional support and recognition. Often they extend the scope of activities to natural heritage protection. A lot of these associations literally adhered to the catch-all definition of environmental associations adopted by the Law for Environmental Associations in order to have access to «public interest group» status ascribed by the environmental administration.

D.5 - Local and regional development-oriented;

D.6 - Associations for cultural and recreational activities (which added interest on environmental and nature conservation issues to more traditional open-air and civic formation activities for young people).

D.7 - Professional, scientific associations whose theme orientation is not directly related to environment in the strict sense (e.g. archaeology, architecture, sociology, rural studies, etc.);

Finally, there is still information about:

E - Year of foundation;

F - Membership; and

G - Funds received from the IPAMB between 1987 and 1994.

Next Tables describe most salient outputs concerning these categories of analysis. They represent the intermediary work for Table 1 of page 239, which is a synthesis of these.

Table A1 - Localisation/Town Size and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Characteristics and environmental orientation of associations	Localisation/Town Size						Total
	Lisb./Oporto		Mid-size Town		Small Town		
	value	%	value	%	value	%	
D1 - Environmentalist, public intervention, wide scope of issues	9	(24)	9	(24)	27	(37)	45 (30)
D2 - Environmentalist, single issue or site protection oriented	7	(19)	11	(30)	14	(19)	32 (22)
D3 - Scientific, professional-exclusive, environmental oriented	7	(19)	2	( 5)	1	( 1)	10 ( 7)
D4 - Historic, cultural (and natural) heritage protection oriented	6	(16)	10	(27)	26	(35)	42 (28)
D5 - Local/regional development oriented	-	( - )	2	( 5)	1	( 1)	3 ( 2)
D6 - Culture and recreation oriented	2	( 5)	3	( 8)	4	( 5)	9 ( 6)
D7 - Scientific, professional, non-environmental exclusive oriented	6	(17)	-	( - )	1	( - )	7 ( 5)
TOTAL	37	(25)	37	(25)	74	(50)	148 (100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A2 - Localisation/Region (I) and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Characteristics and environmental orientation of associations	Localisation/Region (I)						Total
	North/Centre		Lisbon/Tagus Valley		South and Islands		
	value	%	value	%	value	%	
D1 - Environmentalist, public intervention, wide scope of issues	20	(31)	13	(22)	12	(50)	45 (30)
D2 - Environmentalist, single issue or site protection oriented	15	(23)	14	(23)	3	(13)	32 (22)
D3 - Scientific, professional-exclusive, environmental oriented	2	( 3)	7	(12)	1	( 4)	10 ( 7)
D4 - Historic, cultural (and natural) heritage protection oriented	22	(34)	15	(25)	5	(21)	42 (28)
D5 - Local/regional development oriented	1	( 2)	1	( 2)	1	( 4)	3 ( 2)
D6 - Culture and recreation oriented	1	( 2)	6	(10)	2	( 8)	9 ( 6)
D7 - Scientific, professional non-environmental exclusive oriented	3	( 5)	4	( 7)	-	( - )	7 ( 5)
TOTAL	64	(43)	60	(41)	24	(16)	148 (100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A3 - Localisation/Region (II) and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Characteristics and environmental orientation of associations	Localisation/Region (II)						Total	
	Littoral Regions		Interior Regions		Islands			
	value	%	value	%	value	%	value	%
D1 - Environmentalist, public intervention, wide scope of issues	34	(29)	9	(36)	2	(50)	45	(30)
D2 - Environmentalist, single issue or site protection oriented	25	(21)	6	(24)	1	(25)	32	(22)
D3 - Scientific, professional-exclusive, environmental oriented	9	( 8)	1	( 4)	-	( - )	10	( 7)
D4 - Historic, cultural (and natural) heritage protection oriented	34	(29)	8	(32)	-	( - )	42	(28)
D5 - Local/regional development oriented	3	( 2)	-	( - )	-	( - )	3	( 2)
D6 - Culture and recreation oriented	7	( 6)	1	( 4)	1	(25)	9	( 6)
D7 - Scientific, professional non-environmental exclusive oriented	7	( 6)	-	( - )	-	( - )	7	( 4)
TOTAL	119	(80)	25	(17)	4	( 3)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A4 - Area of Intervention and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Characteristics and environmental orientation of associations	Area of Intervention						Total
	Nationwide		Regional		Local		
	value	%	value	%	value	%	
D1 - Environmentalist, public intervention, wide scope of issues	7	(20)	6	(16)	32	(42)	45 (30)
D2 - Environmentalist, single issue or site protection oriented	7	(20)	14	(38)	11	(15)	32 (20)
D3 - Scientific, professional-exclusive, environmental oriented	9	(26)	1	( 3)	-	( - )	10 ( 7)
D4 - Historic, cultural (and natural) heritage protection oriented	4	(11)	12	(32)	26	(34)	42 (28)
D5 - Local/regional development oriented	-	( - )	2	( 6)	1	( 1)	3 ( 2)
D6 - Culture and recreation oriented	2	( 6)	1	( 3)	6	( 8)	9 ( 6)
D7 - Scientific, professional non-environmental exclusive oriented	6	(17)	1	( 3)	-	( - )	7 ( 5)
TOTAL	35	(24)	37	(25)	76	(51)	148 (100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A5 - Year of Foundation and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Characteristics and environmental orientation of associations	Year of Foundation						Total
	Before 1974		1974-1984		1985-1995		
	value	%	value	%	value	%	
D1 - Environmentalist, public intervention, wide scope of issues	1	(20)	5	(11)	39	(40)	45 (30)
D2 - Environmentalist, single issue or site protection oriented	2	(40)	8	(18)	22	(22)	32 (22)
D3 - Scientific, professional-exclusive, environmental oriented	-	( - )	2	( 4 )	8	( 8 )	10 ( 7 )
D4 - Historic, cultural (and natural) heritage protection oriented	1	(20)	24	(53)	17	(17)	42 (28)
D5 - Local/regional development oriented	-	( - )	-	( - )	3	( 3 )	3 ( 1 )
D6 - Culture and recreation oriented	-	( - )	3	( 7 )	6	( 6 )	9 ( 6 )
D7 - Scientific, professional non-environmental exclusive oriented	1	(20)	3	( 7 )	3	( 3 )	7 ( 5 )
TOTAL	5	( 3 )	45	(30)	98	(66)	148 (100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A6 - Membership and Orientation of Environmental Associations (1995).

Membership	Environmental Orientation								Total							
	D.1		D.2		D.3		D.4		D.5		D.6		D.7			
	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%
1 - Less than 100	13	(29)	8	(25)	4	(40)	-	(-)	1	(33)	2	(22)	-	(-)	28	(19)
2 - 100 to 200	8	(18)	4	(13)	3	(30)	11	(26)	1	(33)	-	(-)	2	(29)	29	(20)
3 - 200 to 500	13	(29)	10	(31)	2	(20)	25	(60)	1	(33)	5	(56)	2	(29)	58	(40)
4 - 500 to 1 000	4	(9)	3	(9)	-	(-)	5	(12)	-	(-)	-	(-)	2	(29)	14	(9)
5 - 1 000 to 4 000	2	(4)	7	(22)	1	(10)	1	(2)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	11	(7)
6 - + than 4 000	2	(4)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	2	(22)	1	(14)	5	(3)
7-No information	3	(7)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)	3	(2)
Total	45	(30)	32	(22)	10	(7)	42	(28)	3	(2)	9	(6)	7	(4)	148	(100)
Total Membership	23 772		14 142		2 578		13 793		505		93 454(a)		6 516		154 760	
(%)	(15)		(9)		(2)		(9)		(1)		(60)		(4)		(100)	

Source: IPAMB (1995).

(a) This number includes two associations that declared respectively 60 000 and 32 000 members. The first is the *Corpo Nacional de Escutas* ('National Scouts'), which is a nationwide association run by the Catholic Church and dedicated to recreational and educational activities for young people. The second is the *Centro Português de Cicloturismo/Federação Portuguesa de Cicloturismo e Utilizadores de Bicicletas* ('Portuguese

Federation of Bicycle Riders and Users') which had about 8 000 individual members and 450 federate groups. In the membership number declared to the IPAMB all members of the federate groups were included.

Table A7- Area of Intervention and Membership of Environmental Associations (1995).

Membership	Area of Intervention						Total	
	Nationwide		Regional		Local			
	value	%	value	%	value	%		
1 - Less than 100	6	(17)	5	(13)	17	(22)	28	(19)
2 - 100 to 200	4	(11)	6	(16)	19	(25)	29	(20)
3 - 200 to 500	7	(20)	21	(57)	30	(40)	58	(39)
4 - 500 to 1 000	6	(17)	1	( 3)	7	( 9)	14	( 9)
5 - 1 000 to 4 000	6	(17)	4	(11)	1	( 1)	11	( 7)
6 - More then 4 000	5	(14)	-	( - )	-	( - )	5	( 3)
7 - No information	1	( 3)	-	( - )	2	( 3)	3	( 2)
Total	35	(24)	37	(25)	76	(51)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A8 - Year of Foundation and Area of Intervention of Environmental Associations (1995).

Area of Intervention	Year of Foundation						Total	
	Before 1974		1974-1984		1985-1994			
	value	%	value	%	value	%		
1 - Nationwide	3	(60)	8	(18)	24	(25)	35	(24)
2 - Regional	1	(20)	13	(29)	23	(24)	37	(25)
3 - Local	1	(20)	24	(53)	51	(52)	76	(51)
Total	5	( 3)	45	(30)	98	(66)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

Table A9 - Orientation of Environmental Associations and Funds from INAMB/IPAMB between 1987 and 1994.

Received Funds	Environmental Orientation								Total							
	D.1		D.2		D.3		D.4				D.5		D.6		D.7	
	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	v.	%	value	%
1 - Never received	17	(38)	12	(38)	6	(60)	15	(36)	1	(33)	1	(11)	3	(43)	55	(37)
2 - 1 to 2 times	15	(33)	12	(38)	2	(20)	16	(38)	2	(67)	5	(56)	2	(29)	54	(37)
3 - 3 to 4 times	7	(16)	6	(19)	2	(20)	9	(21)	-	(-)	1	(11)	2	(29)	27	(18)
4 - 5 to 7 times	6	(13)	2	(6)	-	(-)	2	(5)	-	(-)	2	(22)	-	(-)	12	(8)
Total	45	(30)	32	(22)	10	(7)	42	(28)	3	(2)	9	(6)	7	(5)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995).

Table A10 - Area of Intervention of Environmental Associations and Funds from INAMB/IPAMB between 1987 and 1994.

Received funds	Area of Intervention						Total	
	Nationwide		Regional		Local			
	value	%	value	%	value	%	value	%
1 - Never received	16	(46)	9	(24)	30	(40)	55	(37)
2 - 1 to 2 times	7	(20)	18	(49)	29	(38)	54	(37)
3 - 3 to 4 times	7	(20)	6	(16)	14	(18)	27	(18)
4 - 5 to 7 times	5	(14)	4	(11)	3	( 4)	12	( 8)
Total	35	(24)	37	(25)	76	(51)	148	(100)

Source: IPAMB (1995)

At the Library of the *IPAMB*, a selection of technical and legislation reports elaborated by, or under the command of, the environmental administration was also consulted. The most important, such as the *Lei de Bases do Ambiente* (1987) (Basic Law for the Environment), *Livro Branco do Ambiente* (1991) (White Book for the Environment), *Plano Nacional de Ambiente* (1994) (National Plan for Environmental Policy), are explicitly referred to in the main text of the thesis, but others not. Still, scattered publications of environmental groups and of other kinds of non-governmental organizations are also available and were consulted at the Library.

### **1.3. Periodicals and non-regular publications issued by environmental groups and other sources**

At the Library of the *IPAMB* or eventually found in archives and documentation centres of a couple of associations that had been visited, collections of scattered publications and other issued materials by groups and individual activists were also consulted. Some of them deserve particular attention. This is the case, for instance, of the collection of papers issued by Afonso Cautela by the mid to late 1970's;<sup>4</sup> the collection of scattered numbers of the typescript newsletter *Frente Ecológica*, issued by the *Movimento Ecológico Português* around the mid 1970s;<sup>5</sup> and the periodical *Pela Vida - Informação e Coordenação Ecológica - Suplemento da Gazeta das Caldas*,<sup>6</sup> whose publication was halted in 1987 after ten years serving and pushing the movement forwards.

These collections were thoroughly consulted. They revealed particularly important to study and follow the shape, mobilisation activities, and organisational dilemmas of the environmental movement in the first period, with relevance to antinuclear battles. The collection of *Pela Vida* is indeed a unique source of information about mobilisation structures, organisational predicaments, protest actions, weaknesses and potentialities of the environmental movement during a wide period centred on the nuclear issue. The richness of details about movement action and debates internal to the «industry» exhibited in Chapter 4 owes enormously to this source.

For the elaboration of Part III, and apart scattered documents issues by groups that were found in the Archives of *IPAMB*, the consultation of collections of regular and non-regular publications and press releases issued by groups founded by the mid to late 1980s revealed also inescapable. A long list would be necessary to name them all. Particular attention was given to regular and occasional publications issued by most important groups and several bodies of the environmental policy sector.

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<sup>4</sup> See p. 123-4.

<sup>5</sup> On this publication see p.123 and 126.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 127.

The next list is a selection of publications of the kinds described in this section. Then, there is a second list of works not included in the Bibliography (e.g. the collection of papers by Afonso Cautela mentioned in Section 4.2 , p. 123).

#### List One

- *Agência de Informação Ecológica* (1982), issued by *Agência de Informação Ecológica*
- *Alternativa* (1977-78), issued by *Grupo Autónomo de Intervenção Ecológica do Porto*
- *Ano Europeu do Ambiente* (1987-88), issued by *Comissão Nacional para o Ano Europeu do Ambiente*
- *O Biólogo* (1989-94), issued by *Associação Portuguesa de Biólogos*
- *Bios* (1975-87), issued by *Liga de Protecção da Natureza*
- *Boletim Amigos da Terra* (1980-83), issued by *Os Amigos da Terra - Associação Portuguesa de Ecologistas*
- *Boletim Antinuclear* (1982), issued by *Comité Anti-Nuclear de Lisboa*
- *Boletim de Informação Nuclear* (1977-84), issued by *Núcleo de Informação ao Público sobre Assuntos Nucleares*
- *Boletim Informativo* (1989-90), issued by the group *Almargem*
- *Correio da Natureza* (1987-92), issued by *Serviço Nacional de Parques, Reservas e Conservação da Natureza*
- *Dossier Ambiente* (1987-92), issued by *Associação de Engenheiros do Ambiente*
- *Cadernos de Ecologia e Sociedade* (1975-77), issued by the group *Viver é Preciso* and edited by *Editora Afrontamento*
- *Ecologia* (1981), issued by *Comité Anti-Nuclear de Lisboa*
- *Ecologia - Boletim Informativo* (1980-89), issued by *Núcleo Ecológico do Grupo Desportivo dos Empregados do Banco Fonsecas e Burnay*
- *Educação Ambiental* (1987-94), issued by *Instituto Nacional do Ambiente/Instituto de Promoção Ambiental*
- *Fapas* (1990-94), issued by *Fundo de Protecção dos Animais Selvagens*
- *Folha Informativa* (1991), issued by *Confederação Portuguesa das Associações de Defesa do Ambiente*
- *Frente Ecológica* (1975-80), issued by *Movimento Ecológico Português*
- *A Ideia - Revista de cultura e pensamento anarquista* (1981-85), in particular the number 36-37, June 1985, which is fully dedicated to ecological issues.
- *Inforamb - Boletim Informativo* (1991-92), issued by *Associações de Defesa do Ambiente no Conselho Directivo do INAMB*
- *Informação Ecológica* (1978-80), issued by *Colectivo Informação Ecológica*



- *Informar* (1994 -...), issued by *Instituto de Promoção Ambiental*
- *A Joaninha* (1987-94) issued by *Agro-Bio - Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica*
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#### **1.4. Interviews**

Field work comprised visits to headquarters of groups and state agencies, and contacts and interviews with several kinds of participants. Although, interviews were not specifically used as data source, they revealed important as complementary information about sources of data concerning particular items of research. In some cases, they confirmed information obtained from other sources. In other, they revealed important in explaining the structure of current links and relationships between actors.

For this reason, guidelines for interviews were merely circumstantial. Most interviews were taped, but only selected parts were transcribed. However, in any case at all, information obtained from interviews is directly cited or used throughout the narrative and empirical analysis, exception made for cases annotated in the next list. They served essentially as generic information in support of statements and interpretations.

List of Interviews:

##### **a) State agencies**

- Interview to the President of the *Instituto de Promoção Ambiente* (Institute for Promotion of the Environment) focusing the role of this state agency and its relationships with the environmental movement «industry»; the structure and decision-making design of the environmental policy sector; and participation of the public, environmental groups, and other non-state actors in decision-making on environmental issues.

- Two interviews to officials of the IPAMB in charge of services dealing with state initiatives (funds and technical support) towards environmental associations. These interviews focused essentially the features of environmental associations registered at the IPAMB and relationships between the state agency and associations.

b) Environmental associations

- Four interviews were made to leaders of most important associations sited in Lisbon (LPN, GEOTA, QUERCUS and Confederation). The interviews focused on organizational and mobilization structures of each organization and of the movement, participation in policy-making and decision-making of the environmental policy sector, relationships with state actors of the environmental sector and with conventional politics actors, perspectives for the future of the movement, and circumstantial aspects concerning the status of movement organizations within environmental politics in Portugal.

c) Press reporters

- Four interviews were also made to journalists running press sections dedicated to environmental issues in wide audience newspapers (*Diário de Notícias*, *Público*, *Correio da Manhã*, and *Expresso*). In this case, interviews focused essentially the emergence of environmental journalism in Portugal, and the network of its connections with the administration of the environmental policy sector and associations. Current environmental politics events were also discussed in interviews. The interviews revealed particularly helpful in the elaboration of section 7.4. *Associations' communication strategy in the public sphere of environmental politics*

### **1.5. 'Second hand' analysis and data materials**

'Second hand' analysis and data materials that showed relevant for the topic of the thesis was essentially used for the purpose of contextualizing. Data and analytical information about social structure, socio-economic development, political system, interest-groups, policy-making system, state form and regime formation, and other structural features covering the period of analysis, were collected from available bibliography.

However, a lot of works found, mostly newspaper articles by journalists or opinion-makers, focused on particular features of the thesis topics. Sometimes they communicate the authors' point of view and his opinion about issue debates and events, but they very often contained highly relevant information about topics of the thesis. In every case, 'second hand' data and interpretations directly cited in the thesis have been always referred to respective sources, which are included in Bibliography.

## **2. Methodological procedures and selection criteria**

In Section 1.4. (p.40-41) 'package frames' and 'content analysis' are briefly mentioned as *procedures* used to process data from various documentary sources, which had previously been investigated in detail. It would be redundant to show in a very detailed and systematic manner how all data behind narratives and interpretations were processed. However, it is worthwhile to illustrate some methodological procedures in order to clarify potential ambiguities about connections that link data and interpretations in empirical analyses.

In order to make more visible the organisational structure of empirical research, next sections of this Appendix are an effort to further clarify how were data from the various sources selected and handled, and methodological work that lies behind narratives and interpretations expounded throughout the thesis. Under view is, in particular, how data from different sources were compared and combined in order to guarantee uniformity and consistency of descriptions and interpretations.

I hope it will also help to better understand the links between frames of Tables 2-4 (p.249-251) with preceding discussions developed throughout the narratives. The amount and variety of data and sources investigated justifies an extended discussion on methodological procedures, data processing, and selection criteria of events and issues. I hope this discussion will provide a clearer view of the empirical tools used to prepare the narratives.

## **2.1. Data processing**

Although centered on documentary research, this work bears upon a wide variety of data sources. In order to escape methodological problems emerging from the time scope of the analysis and diversity of data collected, information had to be organized to propitiate manipulation. Data processing required, thus, expedite solutions in order to facilitate their handling, combination, and interpretation.

Besides according to chronological order, the structure of the narrative and empirical analysis throughout Part II and III owe very much to the way data was gathered. At least, as much as data assemblage replicates the research plan, which was made in consideration of the analytical model, hypothesis, analytical dimensions, and objects of analysis (see pages 22-36).

The consultation of the weekly periodical *Expresso* played a strategic role in data assemblage. Since it was the only data source selected covering the whole period of the study, it guaranteed time line continuity of data on contextual factors, political opportunities, and issue debates. However, information details from this source are obviously differential regarding to each object of analysis. For instance, it replicates much more state action and discourse than movement organizations' activity, discourse, and mobilization structures. On the other side, the particular impact of some issues, debates, and events upon mobilization structures of the movement hardly was approached with the necessary detail by reports issued by this source.

Of course, the contrary is also true, that is, sources that were particularly rich in details about movement mobilization structures hardly afforded enough information about features of environmental politics whose determinant factors had roots outside the movement «industry» environment. Ingenious and hard working combinations of data from different sources were, thus, necessary to nourish each object of analysis with enough and detailed factual information.

Thus, chronology and central problems arising from the analytical framework provided a first level of data assemblage. While data sources formed a first level of data assemblage

made of hundreds of press copies and handwritten reports, different combinations of data from different sources allowed to build data packages by object of analysis. Thereby, data packages emerged in consonance with the research plan, whose inception derived from the model of analysis and theoretical constructs that give support to hypothesis.

This means also that diversity of data sources was not commanded by their availability, but rather by concrete needs of research at different stages of empirical work. Availability of data just determined that some objects of analysis are maybe more rich in data and details than others.

On the other side, since the analytical framework included the analysis of influential framing factors and processes with specific cultural dimensions, special attention was also paid to how discourses on environmental issues meet certain frame ideas emerging in political or cultural-oriented discourses. These kinds of issue-frames gave rise to what may be called «package frames», which are also examples of a second level of data aggregation.

## **2.2. Content analysis and issue/event selection criteria**

First of all, it must be said that guidelines for media consultation were initially outlined and applied. They aimed at guaranteeing that issues, events, actions, and discourses favoured by media-agendas could be further typified. Typification was prepared in accordance with the research plan, which was made after the model of analysis and hypothesis. Similarly, time-lines on the intensity of movement actions as reported by newspapers were also outlined. Two reasons justify the decision to abandon these methods of document consultation and data processing for preparatory analysis.

The first reason has to do with the need for more detailed and descriptive investigation in state of a deductive strategy. When the research was planned, previous work on the topic of the thesis was non-existent in Portugal, which made this thesis a pioneer work, taking the bad with the good of being so. Thus, the whole story had to be brought to light in first place in the narrative form. It demanded for a more descriptive kind of data processing and more detailed

investigation on events, issue debates, movement organisations, protest actions, local movements, and mobilisation structures of environmental politics.

The second reason had to do with balancing the amount work and individual capacity to do it. Time is always short and resources for research finite. Thereby, in state of typified work, the option was for *a posteriori* content analysis of media reports. Thus, qualitative and descriptive content analysis is the rationale behind most empirical work.

In spite of media sources' relevance in data gathering, important efforts have been made in order to escape obscure or unknown criteria behind media agendas while selecting issues and events pertinent to the topics of the thesis. A first effort was the combination of different data sources, eventually of different press sources. It allowed not only to often add details to information previously available, but also to test relevance given to events and issues by different press and data sources. In this case, however, strict criteria could not be previously established to evaluate relevance of social and political phenomena at stake. Ultimately, this would have to be made in confront with specificity and characteristics of each object of analysis.

For instance, local protests on environmental issues described in Section 4.4. (p.137-42) got attention by the media due to the «novelty» of their emergence and of issues at stake, but they quickly disappeared from media agendas because they had no further impact in mainstream politics. On the contrary, cases of local movements documenting the «Nimby wave of the early 1990's» in Section 6.5. (p.210-216) were selected not because of their eventual political impact, which the media highlighted, but due to their exemplary features in terms of discourse supporting their claims and of mobilisation potentials.

Given the wide scope of objects of analysis and of the period covered by the research, it was not easy to have uniform and previously established selection criteria of issues and events. Once again, data packages from different sources allowed to balance *ad hoc* criteria against the characteristics of the objects of analysis, which cases, events, and issues would have to portray. Thereby, case salience did not necessarily obey to intensity and attention of media coverage, but had rather meet adequacy to dimensions of analysis.



### **2.3. Discourse Analysis**

The analytical framework of the thesis included the consideration of influential framing factors and cultural dimensions of environmental issue debates. Special attention had, thus, to be paid to how discourses on environmental issues meet certain themes emerging in political discourse, such as economic and social modernisation, democracy and political participation, welfare and social rights, European citizenship, science, and so on. These kinds of issue-frames, which run across discourses that struggle for influence in issue and issue-solution definitions in public debates, demanded for a second level content analysis of data gathered.

Data selected for this purpose was gathered from press interviews and public statements of governmental leaders, press articles by opinion-makers, press releases and publications issued by environmental groups and leaders, state agency documents, and so on. They were scrutinised and fractionated in separate parts forming coherent argumentation pieces, which were re-organised in what may be called «package frames». By means of successive adjustments and typification, pieces of discourse extracted from groups' and governmental developer's' statements were put in confront in order to highlight conflicting perceptions of environment *versus* modernisation relationships. As shown in Tables 2-4 (p. 249-251) of Section 7.4., standardised or typified discourse pieces were further systematised in order to express opposed meanings and rationalities emerging from discourses on environmental issues as a framework of moral and/or rational justifications, further portraying different definitions of political interests at stake.

The contents of Tables 2-4 (p. 249-251), which reproduce only a few of these frames, result from a preliminary, exploratory essay of this exercise of content analysis applied to just a small set of selected data documents. The potentials of this procedure were not explored utterly. However, the outputs were considered satisfactory enough as illustration of cultural impacts upon political discourse resulting from the communication strategy, political

standing, and issue cultures performed by environmental associations in the public space of environmental politics. This is why they were presented and only briefly described.

The Tables give just a short overview on a set of significant frames of conflicting perceptions of environment *vis-à-vis* modernisation as performed by environmental groups and governmental developers through public/political discourse. They concern the targets of environmental policy, environmental impacts of economic development policy, and the role of science and expertise in decision-making about environmental risks and issue resolution. They are oversimplified due to typification proceedings that converted them into a dichotomy of negative-positive attributes and problem definition, in order to generate linear two-party lists of opponent propositions and contending positions of participants.

As illustrated in Tables, the propositions are certainly well known and not new. Other divergent and conflicting definitions and conceptions of issue-frames such as democracy, political legitimacy, public participation, social and environmental justice, and so on, which currently also intersect many environmental debates reflecting opposing political interests, would certainly deserve also similar analysis. However, the aim was not to make of this analysis and of methodological tools involved a major, focal point of the thesis, but simply to exemplify how conflicting interests over environmental issues are also forged by culture and ideologies. Culture and ideology shape cognitive frames and rationalities, which the various participants carry on into political and public debates under the form of several problem definitions, fact relevance evaluation, and frameworks for issue resolution.

Although in an exploratory manner, this aim was only possible by means of methodological procedures allowing to reverse attention from surface arguments over concrete issues. By this way, an attempt was made to reach the essence of conflicting perceptions that ultimately generate contrasting positions over facts and issue definitions, and which tend to be dissimulated by the permeability of discourses about concrete issues.